

# DOMESTIC DISCORD

By ERNEST R. MOWRER

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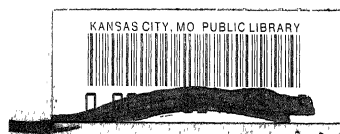


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## DOMESTIC DISCORD

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# DOMESTIC DISCORD

ITS ANALYSIS AND TREATMENT

By

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it was brought to completion*





TO THOSE WHO HABITUALLY DOUBT THEIR  
OWN METHODS, AND SEEK ALWAYS FOR  
MORE LIGHT IN THE UNDERSTANDING OF  
HUMAN EXPERIENCE



## FOREWORD

During the seven years since the establishment of the Wieboldt Foundation the influence of family disorganization has been seen in almost every type of problem or project presented to us. Much evidence is available indicating that the broken home is a very considerable factor in delinquency and crime. Relief agencies are constantly faced with this problem, while child-caring organizations, particularly, owe their continued existence to this type of home maladjustment. A study of the parental status of 4,100 children in 31 homes was made in 1923. The results showed that 1,017 of these children came from homes broken up by separation or divorce.

Social agencies have been more or less helpless with respect to this situation. There are, according to the figures compiled in this study from the records of two family case-work agencies, adjustments of conflict between husband and wife in only 4 per cent of cases in which domestic discord problems are presented. In an additional 5 per cent of the cases one is unable to tell from the records whether there have been adjustments or not. In the remaining 90 per cent it is clear that discord continues or the family has become completely disintegrated. Since it is probable that some cases would adjust themselves without the intervention of a social agency, it follows that little is known about effective treatment for family discord problems.

In the manual of one large family service organization, no treatment tending to preserve the family organization is mentioned. There is a great deal of material in this manual relating to the background of individuals, securing diagnoses

of specialists, and information which might be used in the understanding of the particular situation. Nothing appears, however, as to the technique of proceeding with these findings. This, with the record quoted above as to the small percentage of successful cases, raises the question if the procedure in this type of case is not, fundamentally, the application of common sense in the use of the findings rather than the development of a treatment technique.

Of course social workers realize that this type of treatment is far from satisfactory, but what can they do? Each case of family disorganization presents so many varying factors, and the underlying causes are so obscure that to most workers an adequate understanding is impossible. So often the sexual life of the couple is involved and this is sometimes thought to be too personal a matter for the worker to discuss with both husband and wife. According to the aforesaid manual, "It is inadvisable for the case worker to raise the question of birth control with the client until the client has herself indicated the wish for it." Furthermore, the case worker is often so poorly informed on rational sex life that she is handicapped in recognizing sex conflict when this is the basis of the trouble. Even though this is not the case, it requires a person of unusual qualifications to make an adjustment in so difficult a situation.

All this is not to belittle the accomplishments of case-work, for they are many, but to emphasize the need for more research as a guide to the improvement of case-work technique. Each family case-work organization has an unlimited opportunity for research. There seems to be no reason why each organization should not be expected to spend part of its outlay in this direction so that it may not only contribute toward the development of treatment techniques for its own

use, but make valuable contributions to the understanding of the fundamental problems underlying social maladjustment. Such research must not, however, be mere investigation to confirm theories, but must be thoroughgoing objective surveys of the data, with a willingness to change the point of view on the basis of the findings.

It was with these considerations in mind that the Wieboldt Foundation asked Dr. Mowrer to undertake the present study. It was felt that Dr. Mowrer was especially qualified for this work. It is not necessary to call attention to his very significant volume—*Family Disorganization*—which appeared recently. This volume attests to the intelligent grasp of the subject possessed by the author. The present study is a logical sequel to the former.

It may be suggested that study of the technique involved in any form of case-work should be made by an experienced case-worker. It was, however, just this which we wished to avoid. As a recent writer has said, "It is so easy to be sure we are right when our only critics are those of the same way of thinking as ourselves."

Case-work methods have been developed by a more or less like-minded group and it would be difficult for one of this group to study the technique objectively. A sociologist, on the other hand, with a considerable experience in interpreting the data recorded by case-workers and in evaluating the social effects of the treatment applied, should be able to divorce himself from a prejudice in favor of the accepted way of doing things and consider case-work in the light of its accomplishments. This, we believe, Dr. Mowrer has done in the present study.

FERRIS F. LAUNE

*Executive Secretary*



## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

The problem of family disorganization has received the perennial attention of those who have been interested in social welfare. How conflicting has been the point of view, what inadequacies there have been in the methods of study, and a definition of a more fundamental approach have been treated at some length by the author in another volume, *Family Disorganization*.<sup>1</sup> It is the author's intention, accordingly, to take up the thread in this volume and carry it farther in the direction previously mapped out.

The analysis and treatment of family disorganization may be approached from either the standpoint of culture or from that of behavior. In this volume, the approach, as indicated in the title, will be from that of behavior, leaving for a third volume that from the cultural point of view. With this approach in mind, it is but logical that attention should be centered chiefly upon the diagnosis and treatment of domestic discord by family case-work agencies. These are the only agencies of importance which keep sufficient records of their methods as to make them understandable, except, possibly, courts of domestic relations. But since the author has given considerable attention to the analysis of the data in records of the Chicago Court of Domestic Relations in his previous volume, little will be said here except by way of elaboration.

The first-hand materials obtained as a basis for the treatment which follows is limited, necessarily, to that secured through contacts with Chicago agencies attempting to handle domestic discord problems. There is, however, no dis-

<sup>1</sup>The University of Chicago Press, 1927.

position to criticize those agencies specifically. For anyone to interpret any criticism by the author of any specific points discovered in the contacts with a particular agency as applying only and specifically to the work of that agency is to misunderstand the whole purpose of the discussion which follows. The agencies selected were chosen to the exclusion of other similar agencies only because of either the limitation of time for the study or because they were generally thought to be typical of agencies treating the problem under consideration. The statistical data were taken from only two agencies because they are the only ones in Chicago (except for the Court of Domestic Relations, left out for reasons previously mentioned) which have adequate records of recent date in sufficient numbers to warrant such an analysis as the author wished to make.

Social work has become relatively standardized throughout the United States within the last decade, if not earlier. Yet there are variations within the field which no one can deny. But these variations are not nearly so important as the likenesses, and apply to particular rather than to the general features of the work. Accordingly, the author has purposely restricted his discussion to the general features of the diagnosis and treatment of domestic discord problems by social work agencies, using concrete illustrations only as illustrative of the typical.

The organization of the book falls naturally into four parts: "I. Introduction," "II. Analysis of Domestic Discord," "III. Treatment of Domestic Discord," and "IV. Conclusions."

The writer wishes to acknowledge his indebtedness to the following local organizations for their generous co-



operation: the Catholic Charities, the Juvenile Court, the Court of Domestic Relations, the Juvenile Protective Association, the Salvation Army, the Illinois Children's Home and Aid Society, the Illinois Society for Mental Hygiene, and the Service Council for Girls. And especially is he indebted to the staffs of the United Charities and the Jewish Social Service Bureau: to the district superintendents and supervisors; to Mr. Joel D. Hunter and Miss Amelia Sears, General and Assistant General Superintendents of the United Charities; to Mr. Harry L. Lurie and Miss Virginia Frank, Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent of the Jewish Social Service Bureau.

The writer desires also to make acknowledgment to the Social Science Research Council, from whom part of a grant financed some preliminary collection of data; and especially to the Wieboldt Foundation for financing the completion of the project.

In addition there are those who aided more directly in the completion of the study: Mr. Ferris F. Laune, Executive Secretary of the Wieboldt Foundation, and Professor Arthur J. Todd, Northwestern University, both of whom read the manuscript and contributed many valuable suggestions; Professors Ellsworth Faris, Robert E. Park, and Ernest W. Burgess, Editorial Committee, the University of Chicago Sociological Series.

Especially is the author indebted to Harriet R. Mowrer, Consultant in Domestic Discord, the Jewish Social Service Bureau, who contributed to the study, both in analysis and materials, whatever reconstructive insight and understanding it may have into the problems of case-workers.

ERNEST R. MOWRER

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

June 1, 1928



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PART I  
INTRODUCTION



## CHAPTER I

## THE PROBLEM OF DOMESTIC DISCORD

Domestic discord, or the conflict between husband and wife, has long been thought to constitute one of the major social problems in American life. As such it has received the attention of those who would do something about it as well as of those who were interested primarily in analyzing the forces producing the problem. It goes without saying, however, that whatever may be one's impulses toward reform, it is necessary first to understand the nature of the condition before anything of a reconstructive nature can be started. Yet, time and again there have been such attempts in advance of analysis. This angle, however, has been fully treated in another place, and need not, therefore, be taken up in this connection.<sup>1</sup>

Two angles of approach, at least, are possible in the analysis of domestic discord: (*a*) analysis in the mass as if it were a form of cultural maladjustment, and (*b*) analysis in terms of the individual as a form of personal maladjustment. Of these two approaches the first has been the more common.<sup>2</sup>

For each of these methods of analysis there has developed a method of treatment or reconstruction. The first method of analysis finds its reconstructive counterpart in social reform; the second in case-work. It is the purpose of this book to examine the latter of these techniques and to measure its effectiveness, both logically and statistically.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See chapter i of the author's earlier volume, *Family Disorganization*.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> A later volume, it is anticipated, will be devoted to the analysis of the technique of social reform.

## SOCIAL REFORM

Social reform implies certain mass changes in the direction of what is at the time considered more desirable than the past state of affairs. These changes may be brought about by education, propaganda, and the like, but customarily in the United States, the technique is legislation. The term legislation itself, of course, includes many things from the standpoint of social psychology, but here a simple definition may suffice, viz., an act on the part of a legislative body decreeing what shall or shall not be. Perhaps the most outstanding attempt to deal with domestic discord by legislation is contained in the state laws upon non-support.

## CASE-WORK

Case-work, on the other hand, aims to bring about social reconstruction in quite a different way. Beginning as an organized attempt to "right" the "wrongs" against a submerged group it has developed along many lines of activity, but everywhere the aim is essentially the same, viz., improving the standards of the individual. While one type of social work, family case-work, presumably accepts the family as its unit, it tends everywhere toward individualized treatment, with little more than lip service to the conception of the family as a social unit. However, it is family case-work which has been most concerned with the problems of domestic discord and which will be of chief concern in this study.

The philosophies of these two methods of social reconstruction, accordingly, may be contrasted. Social reform is concerned with the reconstruction of the social order upon the assumption that the habits and attitudes of the mass may be changed at once in the direction which seems desirable—in this connection, toward more family unity. Case-



work, by way of contrast, is interested in bringing about in the individual the best adaptation possible within the present social order. Case-workers are often social reformers, but for the most part their efforts are in the direction of individual rather than mass adjustments.

#### SCIENCE AND RECONSTRUCTION

Science, on the other hand, while its function is to serve as a basis for reconstruction, is not concerned with the concrete details by which reconstruction can be accomplished. The function of science, so far as the problem of domestic discord is concerned, is to provide the analysis requisite for the diagnostic efforts of those who would furnish the "treatment" whether such reconstructive efforts take the form of reform or case-work. Science can further be of service in the analysis of the treatment process also, but its function consists in the discovery of the principles involved in treatment processes and not in the application.

Thus, science is the hand-maiden of social reconstruction and not a form of reconstruction itself. And while the work of the scientist is indispensable to the artist, the art remains an art though science may eliminate much of the lost trial-and-error effort by furnishing the general principles to guide the artist's hand.

#### SCIENCE VS. ART

Science is not a body of systematized knowledge, as some people suppose, but a body of abstractions, stated in the form of principles, laws, or hypotheses.<sup>1</sup> What distinguishes science from common sense is that the scientist transcends

<sup>1</sup> This is not to deny, of course, that a body of systematized knowledge constitutes the essential basis of scientific generalization. But "descriptive science," as it is sometimes called, is at best only the beginning of science—a means to an end. The process of collecting and classifying facts becomes

the world of concrete experience and builds up a world of constructs to take the place of the data of common sense. These constructs are of such a nature that they simplify the world of direct experience into a well-knit whole which not only offers its own explanation of what is directly observed by revealing relationships, but also furnishes the basis for some sort of control.<sup>1</sup>

Art, on the other hand, is quite different from science, and may be defined as a system of methods or rules for performing certain desired actions or producing any group of foreseen results. To paint a picture is to practice an art, but so also is milking a cow or trying a case at law. The interest of the artist is a very practical one, being the performance of a concrete act according to the standards of what is desired. Thus, while the motivating factor in art is a very practical one—the utilization of knowledge and experience to gain certain human ends—that of science is restricted to the accumulation of knowledge for its own sake. This does not mean that science is not useful, but only that if the scientist kept in mind the goal of utility in his research he probably would get very few useful results. It is only as he is able to forget the demands of the artist that he is a successful scientist, though his results are often found by the artist to be very useful, and, in fact, the scientist must depend upon the artist as the court of final authority—though not always on those of his own generation.

Two other closely related terms need to be considered in

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complete only when it terminates in what is most characteristic of science, viz., a system of principles, laws, and hypotheses which make the prediction of future events possible.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Ritchie, *Scientific Method*, pp. 13-14.

this connection: technology and applied science. The first term, "technology," is closely related to the more general term, "art." It is often used to mean a body of terms used in connection with an art, though it may be easily expanded to include the whole range of methods, rules, and technique belonging to a particular art. Usually, the term is restricted to that portion of methods which are not a part of common sense. It is, in fact, quite a useful word and may be used in very much the same sense as the word art. Applied science, on the other hand, is a misnomer as it is ordinarily used, if it is intended to mean anything more than an art or technology in which there is a conscious attempt to formulate rules and methods of action as derivatives of scientific principles or laws. It is obvious that the artist might mix together certain pigments to produce a desired color either because he had been taught to do so by someone else, or because from his knowledge of the physicist's analysis of light he had concluded that that was the proper way. If he chose the latter course he would be practicing what some people call an applied science.

This distinction between science and art has its counterpart in the manipulation of the data with which each is concerned. The function of science is analysis while that of the artist is diagnosis and treatment. And while the distinction between analysis and treatment is clear, that between analysis and diagnosis may not be so apparent. In the literature upon the subject of domestic discord, the two terms are often confused. The result is that much of the discussion of domestic discord is misleading because the analysis is built upon what were intendedly diagnostic materials and can, therefore, be of little use in an analysis of the problem.

## ANALYSIS VS. DIAGNOSIS

The term "analysis" is quite generally understood to mean the breaking up of a thing into its constituent parts. By an easy extension it is often used, especially in logic, to mean the tracing of things to their sources, or the resolving of knowledge into its original principles. This latter definition makes it clear that the process of analysis takes the form of a spiral, going from the complex to the simple, when in the first definition this idea may or may not have been implied. At any rate, in science the term analysis has been generally accepted as a process of abstraction in which concrete experiences are broken up into parts and finally related to a relatively simple body of principles or laws. So in the social field, analysis is a process of abstracting out of a disorderly world of social experience those factors which can be related to a series of explanatory principles. Analysis of this sort may, and often does, require certain modifications of explanatory hypotheses.<sup>1</sup> In other instances it serves to verify hypotheses or else to make the data intelligible, often an end in itself. But in general the term analysis may be used as synonymous with research, the purpose of which is to discover the causal sequences which produce the conditions in which one is interested and so lead to an increase in knowledge within a particular field.

The term "diagnosis," on the other hand, is closely related to analysis and yet has quite a different meaning. Diagnosis was first used in medicine, and then introduced

<sup>1</sup> In fact the whole history of the development of science is replete with instances of this sort. Einstein's so-called discovery of relativity, for example, has tended to revolutionize not only the whole conceptual organization of physics, but that of many of the other scientific disciplines as did Darwin's "discovery" of evolution several decades earlier.

into case-work. It might easily be used in connection with any art. In mechanics, for example, we have what is called the "trouble shooter" whose business it is to discover why a particular mechanism, generally electrical, has ceased to function. The "trouble shooter" is in a small way a diagnostician. So in literature and the fine arts, criticism, except in so far as the critical work is itself a work of art, may be thought of as diagnosis.

Diagnosis in medicine is the study of symptoms in the light of extant medical knowledge for the purpose of determining the nature of the malady, its gravity, and probable course. It does not add anything to the sum total of medical knowledge but relates a particular case to what is known in medicine. The object is, of course, to determine what shall be the treatment. This approach includes a disease concept, which serves as a handle to prescription; that is, for each disease there are certain recognized methods of treatment, depending upon the gravity of the case, the medical facilities at hand, and the personal or professional bias of the physician. But before the physician can determine what course of action shall be taken he must make a diagnosis.

In the field of social work the term "social diagnosis" has been used quite extensively. Generally the term means determining the problems in a given case from the standpoint of case-work. Each family welfare agency has its own list of problems, some of which are taken over from other professions, and others from common sense. Social diagnosis means determining which of the listed problems apply in a particular case. Treatment, then, is based upon these findings and carried out according to the rules of the organization. It is obvious, then, that social diagnosis refers to the investigation of a "complaint" or request for assistance to

determine what is the nature of the situation as a basis for therapeutic treatment according to current and approved standards of the organization and of the profession.

#### DIAGNOSIS OF DOMESTIC DISCORD

The function of the case-worker as a diagnostician is thus defined: It is her job to determine, by investigating the situation presented by the complaint or request for assistance, what are the problems presented. In situations of domestic discord, this usually consists in determining the nature of the conflict under the general terms of non-support, desertion, separation, and domestic infelicity, or other comparable terms. If either husband or wife has left, whereabouts unknown, the problem is desertion. If the husband is failing to "properly" support his family, the problem is, obviously, "non-support." If husband and wife are not living together by mutual agreement, the problem is separation. But if both are living together and the husband is "properly" supporting his family, yet there is conflict and quarreling between husband and wife, then the problem is one of domestic difficulty or domestic infelicity. It is obvious that a single case may present more than one of these three problems at a time. The case-worker thus diagnoses the situation as a preliminary to social treatment, in accordance with the accepted standards of her profession. Treatment follows in accordance with the standards of the organization.

#### NATURE OF SOCIAL THERAPY

While the term "case-work" is used in the general sense with reference to family welfare work to include both social diagnosis and social therapy, in medicine the concept is regarded to mean the treatment of the disease. In the social

field, however, this restriction in meaning is of little importance, because little specialization has developed between the diagnosis and treatment, both generally being performed by the same individual. In this study, accordingly, the term "case-work" will be used to include both diagnosis and treatment.

Social therapy or treatment follows diagnosis and is generally accepted as referring to both the course of treatment prescribed with reference to a particular problem or group of problems and the supervision of the patient or client. The course of treatment involves conscious attempts on the part of the case-worker to correct certain maladjustments between the individual and his environment, both physical and social, indicated by the diagnosis in terms of "problems." This may include, and often does include, supervision of the patient or client in following out courses of treatment prescribed by other professions such as the medical and psychological. In such instances, of course, much of the treatment cannot be said to belong to case-work except in so far as the supervision is carried out by the case-worker. In connection with other problems, however, the whole of treatment may be "social," and therefore its course determined and supervised wholly by the case-worker.

#### TREATMENT OF DOMESTIC DISCORD

Having diagnosed a particular case as presenting a domestic discord problem, i.e., non-support, domestic infelicity, separation, or desertion, the case-worker proceeds to prescribe the course of treatment and supervise the activities of the client accordingly. The purpose of treatment is, obviously, to adjust the difficulty between husband and wife. The procedure is that which is recognized as pertinent and

proper by the profession as defined by the ideals and practices of the particular organization or case-work agency. Supervision, on the other hand, is a matter of personal experience and "knack," for the most part, though in accordance with certain general rules of the organization. It is in this portion of the treatment process that the "personal equation" counts for most in the treatment of all problems of case-work, including those of domestic discord.

Treatment, however, takes certain general forms and can be analyzed, accordingly, in these terms. To be successful and effective it must not run counter to the principles of human behavior. The treatment process provides, therefore, as legitimate a field for analysis as that of the nature of domestic discord.

It may be assumed, then, (1) that treatment to be effective must conform to the general principles of human behavior; (2) that a part of the treatment process consists in diagnosis, and (3) that the adequacy of a diagnosis is dependent upon a satisfactory analysis. The cornerstone of the treatment process is, accordingly, analysis. But the adequacy of the analytical process can only be tested in terms of the usefulness of the results as a basis for treatment.

A multitude of problems immediately arise: Does the current analysis of domestic discord furnish an adequate basis for diagnosis and treatment? If so, is this analysis being used in the treatment of domestic discord? If not, what are the fallacies in the analytical process and how can one arrive at a more adequate analysis? Are the diagnostic efforts of case-workers in line with a scientific attack upon the problem? What can be learned from these diagnostic materials with regard to the nature of the problem of do-



mestic discord? Does the current diagnosis furnish a satisfactory basis for treatment? What are the techniques of treatment in use? Are these procedures effective? Can they be made more effective? How can the effectiveness of a treatment technique be measured? These and many related problems will furnish the central themes of the chapters which follow.

## CHAPTER II

### CASE-WORK AND THE ATOMISTIC CONCEPTION

Before proceeding to a discussion of the case-work approach it is well that one have in mind certain of the limitations of that approach in terms of what are the nature and requirements of science. This would mean that not only should the diagnostic efforts of case-work be based upon a scientific analysis, but also that the method of treatment should not run counter to what such an analysis would indicate.

One of the outstanding characteristics of case-work is its tendency toward a segmental or atomistic point of view.<sup>1</sup> This may be seen both in its diagnostic and therapeutic aspects. It is the purpose of this chapter to examine the logical implications of this point of view and to determine its adequacy for case-work.

All of common sense and much of science in the past has proceeded upon the basis of an atomistic conception of reality. The implication of this point of view is that experience

<sup>1</sup> This point of view looks upon social behavior and society as belonging to an atomic system rather than an organic system. Ritchie (*Scientific Method*, p. 179) has defined an atomic system as "one in which the laws of the parts composing the aggregate as a whole are some simple function of the laws of the independent parts. An organic system on the other hand is such that the parts act differently when combined and in isolation, so that the law of the aggregate may not be a function of the laws of the separate parts at all, or, if it is, is a very complex function." That is, an atomic point of view implies that society is made up of an aggregate of relatively independent individuals each made up of a group of relatively independent attributes. To understand how either the individual or the group behaves is but to total up that for each part of the whole, whether individual or group. The organic

is complex and must be broken up into bits or parts in order that the individual can make the necessary adjustment which life requires. These parts are then considered to be more "real" than the first or primitive experience which consisted in a multitude of confused, undefined stimuli. To the baby, according to William James, the world is a big, blooming, buzzing confusion. He must learn to organize the stimuli which pour in from all angles into units which can be identified and remembered. These units, then, come to color all that follows and to determine to some degree the forms which will follow. It is these parts which become the real.

Out of this attempt on the part of the individual to push his experience into molds and so manipulate it has grown a large vocabulary of common sense. A large portion of our vocabulary is made up of nouns, or symbols which stand for objects or bits of experience. There are also terms indicating relationships between objects, and modifying terms such as adjectives and adverbs. If objects always "staid put," there would be no need for further terms, but change and movement are always present and terms are needed to indicate the nature of these changes. Verbs serve this purpose. But the change is always of objects, whether in time or space or even in more complex relationships.

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point of view, on the other hand, implies at least that the behavior of the whole, whether individual or group, cannot be reduced to a mathematical statement of function of the individual parts of which it is made up. From this point of view, the individual is not the sum total of attributes of which individuals generally are thought to be made up of, but the organization of the attributes into an organic unity in such a way as to change the nature of the attributes themselves, so to speak. Thus the political machine is not simply the sum total of members, but the organization of individuals into a particular type of group which in turn creates a particular type of person, the politician.

Science carries this process of breaking up experience into bits by showing that the units of common sense are not very stable and can be further resolved into more fundamental units, which are both more simple and less given to change. These fundamental units, then, are taken to represent "reality" and, according to the older point of view, are the elements out of which concrete experience is made up and are, therefore, fixed and immutable. If these elements themselves were later found not to be as stable as was first assumed, the scientist tended to take the position that the reality had not yet been discovered, the unit being only an approximation of it, but that eventually the immutable unit would be found.

Philosophers have not always agreed with the scientists in this regard, but their theories are often treated with contempt in scientific circles. Yet philosophers themselves have never been able to reach any agreement as to what constitutes reality: splitting up into schools with realism on one hand and idealism on the other with a confusion of shades in between. At least the natural scientists are fairly of one accord in their acceptance of a realistic philosophy, though often in a pragmatic form.

The typical chemist, for example, assumes that there is a world outside the nature of which he can explore. His discoveries, he admits, may for the time being be only approximations of reality but they serve his purpose for the present. Eventually, he assumes, he will get nearer the truth. Chemistry began with a differentiation of elements which chemists still use. The number of elements have, of course, been greatly enlarged over what it was at first. Then the chemist discovered that these elements could be broken up into what he called molecules, later into atoms. More

recent study of the atom, however, has shown that it is not the simple unit it was once assumed to be and so we have the electron theory of the nature of the atom. But all the time the chemist has been striving to find a stable unit in terms of which he can break up all chemical phenomena. This stable unit, he assumes, constitutes reality, or more nearly what is real than that with which he started.

But why all this interest in units? The answer is not hard to find. The purpose of defining units is to enable one to chart the course of change. But change is an elusive thing and one must have stable elements within in order to handle it. Thus, change is continuous and may be described in terms of changes in relations between units of which those of space and time are the simplest.

Change itself is, of course, an inference and is not observed. What is observed is a series of relationships at one point in time and at another point another series. The difference between these two series constitutes what is called change. But no matter how small may be the interval the inferential experience is always a part of one's observations. Nevertheless, change is no less real than the observed relationships. The older scientists erred in thinking that the problem of science was the "discovery" of stable units or organizations of units. Careful analysis of their work reveals that these units are only constructs of the imagination, useful as terms in a formula for describing change. The reality thus turns out to be the change itself rather than the units of measurement.

#### THE REAL

Reality which we experience is change of behavior. Behavior of any sort implies change in relationships, a new pattern or complex taking the place of the old, and that

being replaced again and again by still another new pattern or set of relationships. This is the reality which we experience, seldom directly, but indirectly. Change is an inference if we mean by change a process or behavior. We may say, of course, that we can experience directly certain simple changes, such as the movement of one's foot or the tracing of a line on a piece of paper. Whether these simple movements are observed or inferred depends upon one's theory of light, the quantum or the wave theory. But we need not go into this problem for it is clear that there is little in our experience which is so simple as these illustrations and so we are forced to admit that our experience of change and of behavior is an inference, though it may be buttressed by an analogy with simpler situations in which the change is actually experienced directly rather than indirectly.

In the plotting of this change in relationships it is necessary to have certain units, hypothetical or concrete, in terms of which to describe the change. The natural sciences have always tended to use what may be called statistical units, "atoms," and to assume that all behavior or change can be broken up into movements of these simple units and described in terms of a mathematical function. Psychology has tried to do the same thing for human behavior. But after such a system has been worked out one finds variations not to be explained in terms of such an atomic system. Certain relationships within the individual organism seem to have a more permanent character than that displayed between units of a kind but belonging to different organisms. This may be taken to require a more complicated method of describing human behavior than the mathematical conception of functions. Not only does the group have a history, but the individual has a history also, and the question raised

is whether the history of the individual can be treated as anything other than organic unit.

It should be clear, it would seem, that logically the atomistic conception of behavior is as acceptable as is the organic. Each has a place in the analysis of the world of human experience. Each also has its advantages and disadvantages. And perhaps the most annoying disadvantage of the organic conception is its tendency to resolve itself into an atomistic conception. One works out a picture of how a particular individual behaves, he compares this picture with that of other individuals' behavior, discovers common elements, abstracts out a common sequence, and before he realizes what is happening, he is talking in terms of the units in the sequence as if they had some reality outside the experience of the individual. He has, in other words, changed his system of analysis into an atomistic one.

This, then, represents the tendency in science. Philosophically all scientists tend to be realists, though individuals may guard themselves against becoming completely so. But the temptation is always present. And the test of whether one should allow himself to utilize only an atomic analysis rests upon the pragmatic test—does it give one control? Obviously, there are abstractions in an organic conception of human behavior, but they are not so far removed from direct experience as are the abstractions in an atomic conception of human behavior, in which all relationships tend to become geometrical.

#### ATOMISTIC VS. ORGANIC CONCEPTION

The atomistic conception assumes that the important relationship is that between two frequency distributions. The highest form of abstraction reached from this point of

view is that where a coefficient of correlation has been obtained. This coefficient thus simply states the probability with which one attribute or variable will be found associated with another, such association indicating either its absence or presence if in terms of attributes, or the varying amounts of occurrence if in terms of variables. The implication is that the attribute has some sort of independent existence apart from the peculiar complex in which it is found. The relationship is made secondary to the existence of the attribute.

From the organic point of view, on the other hand, the relationship is of primary importance. The attribute becomes, in fact, but a figure of speech, a tool for the description of the relationship. Nor does the case-study method limit one to relations which can be stated in quantitative terms. All sorts of relationships may be utilized and they may be so abstractly stated as to eliminate even the need for anything but the most formal attributive concepts. This process of abstracting out of the reality that which recurs in experience, and then projecting it into the environment, we may call the process of conceptualization.

#### CONCEPTUALIZATION

The process of conceptualization is, in its final analysis, a process of blocking off experience into pieces and treating these pieces as relatively stable. So these bits may, if they be reduced to some sort of mathematical statement, i.e., correlated in terms of geometrical relationships, be treated as atoms. But it does not follow that they must be so reduced. They may be treated, instead, as organic units or systems, and relationships described in qualitative language



upon the assumption that to do otherwise would press the data into molds such as to lead to distortion.

It may be argued, of course, that the difference which results in these two procedures for abstracting is only a difference in point of view. The objection to this characterization is that the point of view is often all important, causing one in one instant to proceed in a way which implies little regard for the organic relationship within the unit where the atomistic attitude governs, while in the other instance the organic relationship is always kept in mind as the important element in spite of the recognized necessity for blocking off experience for handling. The difference is also manifest in the units selected. From the atomistic point of view the drive is always toward very simple units—units presumably belonging to a world outside experience—while from the organic point of view one does not feel under obligation to find simple units at all but only to find those which exhibit a relatively constant organic relationship. These units, from the organic point of view, do not imply any correspondence to the world outside experience, but are simply tools with which to handle experience as a fluctuating correlation between an organic unit, the individual, and the inferred outside world.

The reflex arc controversy, for example, has direct bearing upon this point. Psychologists are inclined to speak in terms of stimulation and response. But it is obvious that there can be no response unless there is an organic co-ordination which is able to respond. The temptation is to assume the co-ordination constant and so to be neglected for the simpler analysis in terms of the other two factors, stimuli and responses. Of the two only the response appears

in direct experience and there seems to be no grounds for neglecting the inference of an organic co-ordination any more than the inference of outside stimuli. Both are essential elements in the explanation of the observed response, and from the organic point of view neither is to be disregarded even to the degree of assuming constancy of operation.

PART II

ANALYSIS OF DOMESTIC DISCORD



### CHAPTER III

## DOMESTIC DISCORD AS A PROCESS OF INTERACTION

Domestic discord may be considered in any one of three fundamental aspects: (1) as a threat of disruption of the family as a legal entity, recognized and sanctioned by law and therefore to be conserved as an asset to social organization and well-being; (2) as symptomatic of maladjustment in the social order, and (3) as indicating the lack of adjustment between husband and wife in response relations. Diagnosis of domestic discord, accordingly, may be related to any one of these conceptions of domestic discord and lead to proposals of reconstruction.

There are many still whose conceptions of the family do not go beyond the legal and institutional aspects of relations between husband and wife. Programs are proposed, accordingly, implying two lines of implications. First, the family as a property-holding group. Laws are needed, therefore, to protect the rights of each person to the "contract" of marriage. These have to do chiefly with the questions of support and the division of property in the event of a cessation of relations, due to separation (including divorce) and death. Second, the family as the matrix out of which develop the citizens of the state. Thus the state is interested in the family for its supply of soldiery, and in terms of the performance of other functions, such as voting, taking part in the government, etc. Paternalistic efforts are exerted, accordingly, to insure the continued performance of these functions.

## PROBLEM OF ANALYSIS OF DOMESTIC DISCORD

The problem presented in the analysis of domestic discord is not to determine what are the constant elements in the family relationship, nor to point out kinds of domestic conflicts, but to describe a constant order or pattern in the relations of husband and wife. In other words, the problem is to correlate changes in relations between each individual and what may be grouped under the term environment. These changes, however, are not constant in pattern in the same sense as are elements in the older analysis, where the terms were used to mean something constant in *existence*. Rather are they constant in function and operation; that is, given the beginning of the pattern, the rest follows. One refers to something having an independent existence, an ultimate reality; the other is a formula for describing and calculating the interdependent changes which go on in the relations between husband and wife and which are of such a general character as to be related to a common pattern.

Analysis in terms of elements naturally yielded very well to statistical manipulation because one was always able, at least theoretically, to state relationships in terms of mathematical functions of a relatively simple sort. Such an organic analysis, however, as is implied in the newer viewpoint does not permit such simple treatment. If relations can be stated as mathematical functions, the formulas at least are complex. But there may be some question as to whether or not all relations can be reduced, or even assumed to be equivalent, to geometrical forms.

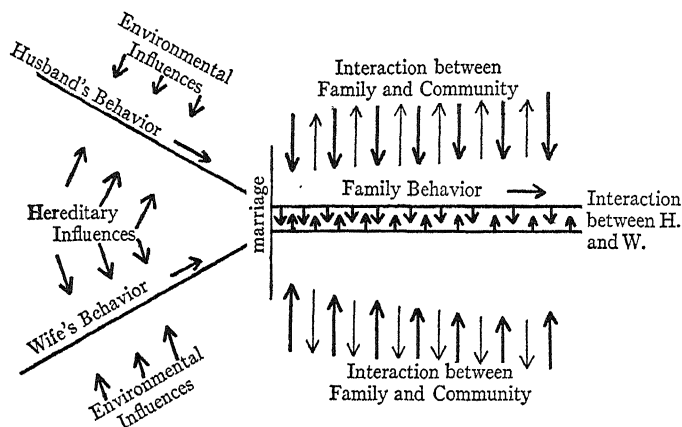
The simplest statements of relationships are in terms of space of which the type; A is to the right of B, is illustrative. All geometrical relationships are derivations of this simple statement, though on the surface they may seem

far removed. Time relationships can easily be treated as if they were geometrical in nature and so do not involve the introduction of any great difficulty in analysis. Such treatment of relationship implies the acceptance of elements considered to be constant in character. And while the mathematicians are experimenting with systems minimizing the importance of the unit and emphasizing change, no one has pointed out how these theories may contribute to the analysis of human behavior.

The correlation method, whether of two series or more, is generally the most highly developed form of mathematical analysis applied to human behavior. Yet such an analysis of data in either time or space shows nothing more than the tendency with which the volume of one particular type of occurrence decreases or increases in relation with that of another or others upon one or several planes. How the changing attitudes and behavior of husband and wife can be stated as a mathematical function, one of the other and each of the changes in the environment, is difficult to see. Such a statement would require some method for calculating the amount of change in each, and so reduce one's statements to quantitative terms, a procedure which is defensible, but certainly not obligatory. But the chief impediment to the process is the realization that, once completed, it may give one a false complacency about the whole thing which will discourage rather than encourage more thoroughgoing analysis, by framing the description into such rigid and simplified forms that more is lost than retained.

The alternative seems to lie in the direction of a qualitative description of the characteristic ways in which husband and wife react toward each other in response not only to the behavior of the other, but to that of their

environments—both physical and social—as well. This may be represented diagrammatically as follows:



The keynote of such a conception is, obviously, interaction, which may take either of two forms: (1) conflict, i.e., discord, and (2) accord. Conflict may be either open and overt, or it may be incipient and repressed. Accord also may be of either of two types: (1) accommodation in which the conflict elements are dissipated by a tacit agreement but which with a change in situation may readily appear, or (2) it may represent complete identification of interests at least so far as a particular type of situations is concerned.

#### THE ACCORD PATTERN

The accord pattern, i.e., those characteristic ways in which husband and wife adjust their attitudes and behavior in accommodation with each other, may take either of two forms: the conventional or habitual, and the romantic or



empirical. Where the accord pattern is of the first type, relationships tend to become defined either in terms of conventional standards or patterns or as habitual variations from these conventional patterns. In the course of time these patterns of relationship tend to become so rigidly fixed that they do not change even in situations in which little of the original elements are present.

The second, or romantic, pattern is that in which there tends to be a constant flux in relationships, a continual adjustment to the changing situations to which the couple is subjected. In concrete cases, of course, this type, is seldom, if ever, found in its pure form, but more often intertwined with the first form or pattern. Neither in the present age in America is the first pattern, the conventional, to be found in its pure form very often, though past generations were much more familiar with it. Yet all marriages tend to take on many routine and habitual forms of relationship, especially as expressed in overt behavior. It is for this reason that marriages often come to the breaking-point without even being recognized by the most intimate acquaintances. In fact it is not unusual for married couples themselves to be confronted suddenly with a break without having before recognized that their attitudes toward each other have changed, because of the tendency for overt adjustment patterns to continue to function in new situations. It is this phase of domestic discord which is commonly unappreciated by the case-worker and causes her to give undue attention to the factors in the immediate situation. It is also this phase which necessitates the formulation of a theory of conjectural factors to explain what appears to be the cataclysmic origin of domestic discord.

CATAclySMIC VS. GENETIC ORIGIN OF  
DOMESTIC DISCORD

One of the most common fallacies of the case-work approach is the assumption that domestic discord has a cataclysmic origin. According to this theory, domestic discord arises in a crisis situation brought on by factors or forces of a fortuitous character, and which to the case-worker often appear comparatively trivial. These factors, according to this theory, are enlarged upon, "making a mountain out of a molehill," and a very serious situation results out of what in the beginning was a quarrel about trivial things.

This theory has much in common, in fact, with all fatalistic theories, not excluding the germ theory in medicine. The germ-hunter goes out like the knights of old hunting for the dragon. The case-worker also is hunting for a dragon as an explanation for the origin of domestic discord. And it is generally assumed that the dragon changes his color from case to case, running the gamut of all the crisis situations which could occur in the life of any individual or group.

The alternative explanation is that domestic discord has a genesis just as does a full-grown tree or a fully developed organism. This theory is closely related, logically, to the resistance theory in medicine. If the organism is functioning properly, that is, if it is in good health and has considerable reserve energy, it will be able to throw off the poisons which produce sickness. To understand the incident of disease, then, it is necessary to understand how the resistance of the organism was lowered to such an extent as to be unable longer to throw off these poisons. The appearance of a "germ" is fortuitous, but it may be the efficient cause of the cataclysm, i.e., the onset of the malady. In the same way,

domestic discord is a matter of growth, a process of summation, which has its beginning considerably removed from the crisis situation in which it becomes conscious and defined. This crisis is brought about by what may be called fortuitous factors or forces which are of little importance in the total situation.

#### THEORY OF CONJECTURE

In every complex situation there are factors of a fortuitous or conjectural nature which must be taken into account whenever an explanation is sought. These factors may be of so little consequence that they may be neglected without prejudicing one's results, in certain instances. In others, they may constitute the most important factors and thus define the problem of paramount interest, namely, bringing them within control by reducing their occurrence to some sort of regularity.

To conjecture is to surmise or guess in the common usage of the term. A fortuitous occurrence is one happening without cause—a chance occurrence. So we may say that a conjectural factor is any fortuitous occurrence or condition which plays a rôle in producing a result but for the occurrence of which we have for the moment no explanation except possibly a guess, though not necessarily even that. Such factors usually turn out to be occurrences or conditions, the study of which belong within another field. In most instances such conditions may by definition be brought within the scope of one's field, but often it is not expedient to do so, and as often the results are not as satisfactory as if one had depended upon the explanation offered by those working within the field from which the condition was taken.

One can readily see, for example, that business depression with the resulting unemployment may constitute the

deciding factors in a conflict between husband and wife, and cause an open break. The business depression is the conjectural factor the explanation for which one turns to the economist. If the economist can offer no satisfactory explanation which can be of use in predicting the results in a given case of domestic discord, then one may redefine the occurrence in general terms, namely, as a form of social stress. To do so however, only creates another stress to fit into the sequence and leaves one where he started—with a whole group of tensions, the occurrence of no one of which he can predict with any degree of accuracy. Thus one but redefines his problem by making it more complicated when originally he wished to simplify it.

The other alternative is to take into account what may be considered to be the strictly social factors so far as one's explanation is concerned, with the qualifications necessary to include such economic factors as business depression, considering such as conjectural except in so far as the economic explanation is satisfactory. Such a limitation is obviously a pragmatic one, and may be dispensed with eventually. But it may for the present represent the best analysis possible.

Thus the point at which a break will come in the relations between husband and wife cannot be predicted in a time sequence because its occurrence is predicated upon the appearance of certain conjectural factors. Yet the situation may be analyzed to the extent of determining all the necessary factors except the conjectural one, and furthermore, the sort of conjectural factors which are likely to operate, and ultimately a theory might be expected to explain the appearance of these latter factors.

There is, in fact, a tendency to confuse two elements in

the analysis of behavior sequences, namely, the time element and the functional element. It is true that every social event, whether the organization of a club or the exchange of accusations over the breakfast table, has a time setting. It is the function of an objective analysis, however, to relate the elements of interaction to a conceptual scheme in which the time element enters only to the extent of indicating the order of occurrence.

## CHAPTER IV

### DIAGNOSTIC FACTORS IN CASE-WORK

Family welfare agencies began as relief organizations, whose primary purpose was to give material relief to needy families. In the primary group, the village, the agricultural community, this function was performed, first, by the family and, secondly, by the community either as a whole or by individuals. No organization was necessary, for everyone knew the needs as well as the merits of each case. With the development of cities, other groups tended to take over this function, such as churches, lodges, etc., which did not make this their chief function, however. Later, both historically and naturally, private agencies supported by voluntary subscriptions and conducted largely by volunteers assumed the task of giving relief as a way out of the dilemma created by the tendency for persons to beg as an easy way of making a living.

Family welfare agencies, thus, took on two functions: (1) the function of giving relief, "charity," to those in needy circumstances, and (2) the function of protecting individuals who wished to give "alms" from the indiscriminate demands of others.

The early records of such agencies reveal that the burden of the investigation of a request for aid was not so much to determine the extent of the need but more to assure the agency that the request was worthy of consideration. The legitimacy of the request was determined with more dispatch upon the basis of first contact. The Salvation Army in many places still operates to a large extent upon this

basis. All other family welfare agencies, at least in the larger cities, have long ago passed this stage of development.

#### INVESTIGATION TO DETERMINE NEEDS OF FAMILY

The second stage in the development of family welfare agencies was reached when the chief task set for the worker was to determine the legitimacy of the request for assistance. Worthiness no longer was considered except, perhaps, in a sublimated form in terms of co-operation. The drive toward determining the legitimacy of the request caused case-workers to see the need for some objective measurement and the result was the family budget. The family budget was supposed to represent the minimum standard of living at which a family could maintain a wholesome existence and not become a menace to the community. If the income of the family fell below the minimum, the family agency made up the deficit either in cash or in kind. But all this required not only considerable investigation at the initial request, but constant re-investigation. The technique of family case-work thus became that necessary for making the required investigations. By an easy extension, medical services were added, the family case-worker serving as a connecting link between the individual and the agency giving free medical service. Her technique, developed in handling relief problems, served very well in this extension into the medical field, especially so long as its purpose was simply to determine the possibility of a need for medical attention and required the obtaining of no facts pertinent to medical diagnosis.

Miss Richmond has made a great deal of the distinction between real, testimonial, and circumstantial evidence—a distinction quite essential to the giving of financial relief. This distinction she has taken over from the field of law

where all evidence is presented to the court to be sifted in an attempt to arrive at the truth. But the "truth" is a metaphysical entity which may be postulated but never experienced. And while the drive toward the truth may be quite pertinent to the giving of economic relief, it may not be so important in the treatment of other problems. In fact it has been said that a whole generation of social workers have gone off on a tangent of truth-seeking to the neglect of gaining insight into the problems of those whom they seek to assist.<sup>1</sup>

#### DETERMINATION OF PROBLEMS

The third stage in the development of diagnosis in family case-work was reached when the task of the worker became the determination of what problems were presented by each case. Following the recognition of medical problems came that of mental problems and then of behavior or conduct problems. At first these problems were recognized informally, but later they were accepted as a formal part of the work and recorded in the record. At first case-workers talked about "causes" but under the deterring stimulus of criticism they dropped the term "cause" from their vocabulary and substituted the concept "problem" in its stead. The function of the case-worker thus became that of determining what problems were presented in a given case and then referring the individual to the proper agency for the treatment of that problem, except to reserve the giving of economic relief to

<sup>1</sup> It is only fair to say that there is nothing in Miss Richmond's *Social Diagnosis* to indicate that the author considered the search after truth to be the only thing of importance in social diagnosis, but such has sometimes been the trend of interpretation. No book in the field of family case-work has been so epoch-making, perhaps, in making for more objective treatment of poverty. Its limitations as a guide to the diagnosis of other problems of a more fundamental, i.e., human, nature may have been neglected by case-workers, thus leading to the foregoing charge.



themselves. This tended to make of the family case-work agency, to a certain degree, a "diagnostic information bureau."<sup>1</sup> It also has tended to furnish, perhaps, a convenient rationalization for the failures of treatment by the family welfare agency. According to this formula any failure in treatment is the result of the absence of the proper agency to which the case might have been referred for treatment.

The logic of the procedure is that the problem serves as a label for determining the treatment. It is assumed that for each problem there is an appropriate treatment technique and to discover the problem, therefore, serves as a cue to the treatment technique, which often consists in reference to another agency.

#### DOMESTIC DISCORD PROBLEMS

In the diagnosis and treatment of conflict between husband and wife, several problems have become generally recognized by family welfare agencies. Representative of these are those used by two Chicago agencies:

##### United Charities:

- Desertion
- Non-support
- Domestic infelicity

##### Jewish Social Service Bureau:

- Desertion
- Non-support
- Separation
- Domestic difficulty<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is apparent, of course, that this service is highly worth while. Yet it does not follow that as high degree of training or experience is necessary as for performing other functions.

<sup>2</sup> January 1, 1927, the Jewish Social Service Bureau revised its list of problems. Problems of domestic discord are, according to the new classification, a part of a large section called Defective Family Relationships which is made up of the following problems: (1) separation of parents; (2) death of

Desertion is used in both agencies, where husband or wife leaves the home, giving no information as to his or her destination. Non-support is used in substantially the same sense in both instances, meaning failure to support on the part of those legally responsible. Domestic difficulty and domestic infelicity are each used to indicate conflict between husband and wife who are living together. Separation is used by the Jewish Social Service Bureau to indicate that husband and wife are living apart by arrangement for domestic reasons. The term is not used by the United Charities except to characterize the social status of the case. It is obvious that the problem, non-support, may be used with reference to failure of children and close relatives to support if they are legally responsible to do so, as well as to the husband and father.

In view of the common nature of these problems, so far as they concern the relations between husband and wife, they may be called domestic discord problems. It has been pointed out that non-support does not necessarily concern the relations between husband and wife and therefore a re-definition of problems at this point seems highly desirable. In this study, accordingly, the term will be used only with reference to the conflict between husband and wife which takes the form of failure of the husband to make satisfactory contribution to the household budget.

But whatever the classification, the purpose is constant.

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one or both parents; (3) desertion of father or mother; (4) abandonment of child; (5) illegitimacy; (6) bigamy; (7) problems due to stepmother or stepfather in the home; (8) non-support by parents; (9) non-support by child; (10) incompatibility of parents due to (a) difference in age, (b) divergent standards and habits, (c) degree of Americanization, (d) sexual incompatibility; (11) quarreling between children; (12) lack of interest or sympathy of relatives.

What the problem does is to serve as a handle to treatment. Each problem, presumably, requires a different technique of treatment. Family case-work agencies have come to be largely agencies of social diagnosis through the direction of attention chiefly toward the differentiation of problems.

#### DIAGNOSIS OF DOMESTIC DISCORD

The diagnosis of the problem of domestic discord, however, requires the recognition of a group of symptoms. These, presumably, constitute the range of investigation on the part of the case-worker. In truth, however, case-workers include a whole range of concrete facts not formally recognized as being particularly related to the problems formally recorded. Part of this interest in unrelated data is due to the artistic tendencies of workers and part to the insistence in case-work that each case is unique and must be treated differently. Unfortunately, there has been no systematic attempt to organize the data in case-records about the central concepts, i.e., problems. In medicine, for example, the organization of symptoms about the central concepts has been done in terms of diseases.

In attempting to determine what are the diagnostic factors in domestic discord problems, accordingly, one is forced to draw inferences from the data recorded.<sup>1</sup> The statistics which follow, then, represent the frequency of occurrence of factors which might conceivably be thought related to do-

<sup>1</sup> The author recognizes that case-workers do not write down all they know about a particular case in the record. The following analysis is made upon the assumption that the data left unrecorded are of the same sort and of the same order as those which are recorded. Thus a particular factor would appear more frequently if the worker always recorded it, but it is doubtful if any frequently occurring factor which is recognized by the case-worker is habitually left out of every record. And if so, the next worker is just as likely to overlook it.

## DOMESTIC DISCORD

mestic discord, inasmuch as these were recorded in those portions of the records given to descriptions of conflict situations between husband and wife or to those sections describing contacts whose purpose seemed to be the treatment of domestic discord.

TABLE I

DIAGNOSTIC FACTORS	PERCENTAGE OF CASES IN WHICH FACTOR OCCURRED:		
	Both	Jewish Social Service Bureau	United Charities
Abuse.....	41	48	36
Drink.....	31	15	42
Immorality.....	30	30	30
Irregular habits, gambling, etc.....	19	28	12
Mental deficiency.....	18	25	13
Affinity.....	18	18	18
Laziness.....	18	16	19
Bad housekeeping.....	17	23	12
Nagging.....	13	21	8
Family interference.....	13	19	8
Uncontrolled temper.....	12	21	6
Jealousy.....	9	12	6
Extravagance.....	8	11	6
Physical deficiency.....	7	8	6
Stinginess.....	6	12	2
Excessive sexual demands.....	5	8	3
Sex refusal.....	5	9	2
Slovenliness.....	5	6	4
Venereal disease.....	5	5	5
Children by previous marriage.....	4	6	3
Discipline of children.....	4	4	4
Evil companions.....	3	5	2
Age differences.....	2	3	2
Inadequate income.....	2	2	3
Sex perversion.....	2	1	2
Restlessness.....	2	1	3
Black sheep.....	1	2	1
Religious differences.....	1	0.4	2
National differences.....	0.4	0	1

The data (Table I) were taken from 636 case-records of the Jewish Social Service Bureau of Chicago and from 937 records of the United Charities of Chicago.

There are, it would seem, differences in the frequency with which certain factors occur for the two organizations. Fifteen out of the 28 factors show sufficient differences to be regarded as significant.<sup>1</sup> These are: abuse, drink, irreg-

<sup>1</sup> The practice throughout will be to compare groups of cases presenting mutually exclusive attributes in terms of certain common attributes. If the proportion of cases in a group showing a particular attribute is different from that in the other group for the same attribute, then this difference will be considered significant if it equals or exceeds 2.57576, i.e., 2.58 standard errors, which is to say that the probabilities are 100 or more to 1 that the difference is not due wholly to chance.

Two types of comparisons will be made in terms of the formulas required for computing the standard error, though so far as results are concerned they both amount to the same thing. First, in some instances all cases will be divided into two groups and comparison made between the two subgroups. Second, in other instances subgroups will be compared with the total group. The standard errors may be differentiated symbolically as  $\epsilon_{12}$  and  $\epsilon_{01}$  respectively, computed according to the following formulas:

$$\epsilon_{12} = \sqrt{p_0 q_0 \left( \frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2} \right)} \quad \text{and} \quad \epsilon_{01} = \sqrt{p_0 q_0 \left( \frac{n_2}{n_1 + n_2 \times n_1} \right)}$$

where  $p_0$  is the percentage in the total group and  $q_0$  is the difference obtained by subtracting this percentage from 100 per cent (i.e., 1.00), and  $n_1$  and  $n_2$  are the sub-groups making up the total cases.

This procedure is based upon the theory of sampling for attributes. Theoretically, if two very large samples are drawn from an infinite universe the proportion of cases having a particular attribute in each sample will be the same as that for the universe as a whole, unless there is some factor in the selection of cases which prejudices the results. In practice, however, samples are not ordinarily large enough to insure one whether observed differences in proportions are the results of the operation of a selective factor or are only the result of chance fluctuations in the samples and would disappear if sufficient cases were added. The degree to which two samples may vary and still not represent the operation of some selective factor depends upon the size of the samples. This is customarily indicated by what is known as the "probable error" of the difference, which measures the range within which chances are equal that an observed difference will fall, even though the true proportion remains constant. The probability that a given difference, falling outside the range so indicated, could have occurred by chance declines rapid-

ular habits, mental deficiency, bad housekeeping, nagging, family interference, uncontrolled temper, jealousy, extravagance, stinginess, excessive sex demands, sex refusal, children by former marriage, and evil companions. Differences for each of these factors either equal or exceed 2.58 standard errors, the highest being about four times 2.58 $\epsilon$ .<sup>1</sup> All occur more frequently for the Jewish Social Service Bureau, except drink which occurs much more frequently in United Charities' cases.

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ly, becoming about 100 to 1 when this range has been multiplied by 4. Differences falling beyond the range indicated by about four times the probable error (2.5757 $\epsilon$  to be exact) are ordinarily considered significant, i.e., not to have occurred solely as the result of chance fluctuations in the samples.

It is obvious that a difference exceeding 2.58 standard errors does not rule out the possibility of chance selection but only makes it highly improbable. So, too, a difference less than 2.58 does not rule out the possibility of a selective factor, but only indicates a high probability in favor of chance. Neither can any hard and fast line be drawn between what is the operation of fluctuations in the samples and what is the result of the operation of selective factors. Differences in proportions approaching 2.58 $\epsilon$  are to be given more weight than those in the other direction, and may, if taken cautiously, be interpreted as indicating possible trends.

Further, the use of this procedure implies the fulfilment of three conditions, which, in the nature of things, cannot always be guaranteed: (1) that the attributes be the same for both subgroups, (2) that the ratio between observed and present attributes be constant for both subgroups, and (3) that the individual appearances of an attribute be completely independent of one another. For further discussion of these conditions, as well as for the mathematical justification of the procedure the reader will find Yule, *An Introduction to the Theory of Statistics*, chaps. xiii and xiv, as readable as any of the systematic treatments.

<sup>1</sup> 2.58 standard errors are: abuse, 6.6 per cent; drink, 6.2 per cent; irregular habits, 5.5 per cent; mental deficiency, 5.2 per cent; bad housekeeping, 4.2 per cent; nagging, 4.5 per cent; family interference, 4.5 per cent; uncontrolled temper, 4.4 per cent; jealousy, 3.9 per cent; extravagance, 3.6 per cent; stinginess, 3.2 per cent; excessive sex demands, 2.9 per cent; sex refusal, 2.9 per cent; children by former marriage, 2.6 per cent; evil companions, 2.3 per cent.

## RELATION OF FACTORS TO PROBLEMS

It is apparent from Table I also that there is a wide variation in the frequency with which these twenty-nine diagnostic factors occurred. Such a variation, however, is to be expected since each factor is presumably associated with a particular problem and serves as a symptom, indicating that problem, and the frequency with which each problem occurs varies widely, as shown by Table II.

TABLE II

PROBLEMS	TOTAL		JEWISH SOCIAL SERVICE BUREAU		UNITED CHARITIES	
	No.	Percent-age	No.	Percent-age	No.	Percent-age
Total.....	1,573	100	636	100	937	100
Domestic infelicity.....	360	23	244	38	116	12
Desertion.....	474	30	90	14	384	41
Non-support.....	127	8	15	2	112	12
Combinations inc. separation (J.S.S.B.).....	612	39	179	46	325	35

The next step is to relate these diagnostic factors to the several problems. Table III shows the percentage of cases in which each factor occurred, classified by problems.

Comparing the frequency with which each factor occurred in cases in which the problem was domestic infelicity with the frequency in the total group, significant differences are obtained for the following factors: abuse, drink, irregular habits, mental deficiency, bad housekeeping, nagging, family interference, uncontrolled temper, jealousy, extravagance, stinginess, sex refusal, excessive sex demands, children by former marriage, and evil companions. All of these occur more frequently in cases where the problem is domestic

infelicity than in the whole group except for drink, which occurs less frequently.<sup>1</sup> It will be observed, also, that this list is exactly the same as that found in the comparison between

TABLE III

Diagnostic Factors	Total	Domestic Infelicity	Desertion	Non-Support	Combinations inc. Separations
Abuse.....	41	57	30	35	41
Drink.....	31	23	31	38	32
Immorality.....	30	34	27	24	31
Irregular habits.....	19	24	15	18	18
Laziness.....	18	19	20	26	15
Affinity.....	18	16	19	13	19
Mental deficiency.....	18	27	12	13	18
Bad housekeeping.....	17	22	9	12	20
Nagging.....	13	19	9	9	13
Family interference.....	13	18	9	9	12
Uncontrolled temper.....	12	21	8	4	12
Jealousy.....	9	15	6	4	8
Extravagance.....	8	12	4	5	9
Physical deficiency.....	7	8	7	3	8
Stinginess.....	6	12	2	2	7
Venereal disease.....	5	6	4	6	5
Sex refusal.....	5	11	2	2	4
Slovenliness.....	5	5	3	4	6
Excessive sex demands.....	5	8	3	3	5
Children by former marr...	4	7	2	2	5
Discipline of children.....	4	5	2	4	4
Evil companions.....	3	7	3	2	2
Restlessness.....	2	1	4	1	2
Age differences.....	2	2	2	1	2
Sex perversion.....	2	1	1	2	2
Inadequate income.....	2	3	2	7	0
Black sheep.....	1	1	1	2	2
Religious differences.....	1	1	1	2	1
National differences.....	0.4	1	1	1	0

<sup>1</sup> 2.58 standard errors are: abuse, 5.8 per cent; drink, 5.5 per cent; irregular habits, 4.7 per cent; mental deficiency, 4.7 per cent; bad housekeeping, 4.4 per cent; nagging, 4 per cent; family interference, 4 per cent; uncontrolled temper, 3.8 per cent; jealousy, 3.4 per cent; extravagance, 3.2 per cent; stinginess, 2.8 per cent; sex refusal, 2.6 per cent; excessive sex demands, 2.6 per cent; children by former marriage, 2.3 per cent; evil companions, 2 per cent.



the two organizations, Jewish Social Service Bureau and the United Charities. Since domestic infelicity is a much more frequent problem in the Jewish group, this seems to explain the greater frequency with which certain factors occur in cases from the Jewish Social Service Bureau.

Yet, while these factors occur more frequently in domestic infelicity problems, except drink, they are by no means absent in cases presenting other problems. Drink, for example, occurs in connection with 57 per cent of the problems of domestic infelicity, 30 per cent of the problems of desertion, 35 per cent of non-support, and 41 per cent where there are combinations of problems. Or, again, the frequencies of occurrence of mental deficiency with each of the problems, domestic infelicity, desertion, non-support, and combinations, are 27, 12, 13, and 18, respectively. What is true of drink and mental deficiency is true, also, for each of these diagnostic factors.

Comparing desertion cases with all cases, significant differences are found for these factors: abuse, irregular habits, mental deficiency, bad housekeeping, nagging, family interference, uncontrolled temper, jealousy, extravagance, stinginess, sex refusal, children by former marriage, discipline of children, and restlessness.<sup>1</sup> These, however, occur less frequently than in the total group, except for restlessness. It may be seen that this list is substantially the same as that for domestic infelicity, except that drink, excessive sex demands, and evil companions do not appear, while dis-

<sup>1</sup> 2.58 standard errors are: abuse, 5 per cent; irregular habits, 4 per cent; mental deficiency, 3.9 per cent; bad housekeeping, 3.8 per cent; nagging, 3.4 per cent; family interference, 3.4 per cent; uncontrolled temper, 3.3 per cent; jealousy, 2.8 per cent; extravagance, 2.7 per cent; stinginess, 2.4 per cent; sex refusal, 2.2 per cent; children by former marriage, 2 per cent; discipline of children, 2 per cent; restlessness, 1.4 per cent.

cipline of children and restlessness have been added. But the variation for each of the common factors showing significant differences is in the opposite direction.

Only four factors show significant differences in frequency of occurrence where the problem of non-support is compared with all cases. These factors are: drink, laziness, uncontrolled temper, and inadequate income.<sup>1</sup> All except uncontrolled temper occur more frequently in non-support cases than in the total group. But again each of these factors occurs in connection with other problems.

The group of cases in which the problems presented were combinations of two or more problems, including cases in which separation (J.S.S.B.) was the only problem, conforms more closely to the distribution of all cases than any of the other subgroups. Yet there are significant differences for the following factors: laziness, bad housekeeping, inadequate income, and black sheep.<sup>2</sup> Bad housekeeping and black sheep are characteristics of this group of cases, while the factors inadequate income and laziness are relatively less common than for the total group. This leaves twenty-five factors which occur with about the same frequency in this subgroup as in the total, a result which is not surprising since the frequency with which each problem occurs in combination with some other is probably closely related to its occurrence singly.

Thus, while certain factors are more characteristic of some problems than of others, there seem to be no factors which are associated exclusively with any particular prob-

<sup>1</sup> 2.58 standard errors are: drink, 10 per cent; laziness, 8.4 per cent; uncontrolled temper, 7.1 per cent; inadequate income, 3.1 per cent.

<sup>2</sup> 2.58 standard errors are: laziness, 3.1 per cent; bad housekeeping, 3 per cent; inadequate income, 1.1 per cent; blacksheep, 0.8 per cent.

lem and serving as a symptom of it. What, then, is the basis for determining the problem in a given case if not in terms of the peculiar diagnostic factors presented? The other alternative is that, while factors in themselves are found associated with all problems, they appear in peculiar combinations in certain cases and not in others and this serves to differentiate the problem. When a classification of combinations of factors was attempted, it was found that there were 384 different combinations. One must conclude, then, that in so far as combinations of factors occurred, the particular arrangement was fortuitous, and that the diagnosis in terms of problems was upon the basis of other factors in each situation not recorded in the schedule. These factors, in fact, are easily discovered by referring to the definition of problems used by the case-work agency, and they are in legal terminology except for one problem, domestic discord.<sup>1</sup> The process of diagnosis turns out to be, accordingly, much simpler than the schedule implied and based upon common sense. The problem constitutes either a simple characterization of the situation such as separation and domestic infelicity, or else it indicates the need for legal action, such as desertion and non-support. What purpose the data served which have been subsumed under what have been called "diagnostic factors" is not clear.

It is apparent, then, that the fundamental problem in each case is one of domestic discord and that the typical

<sup>1</sup> One agency has defined these problems as follows:

*"Desertion:* to be used where husband or wife leaves the home, giving no information as to his or her destination; *Separation:* to be used where the couple live apart by prearrangement because of domestic reasons; *Non-Support:* to be used in case of failure to support from those legally responsible; *Domestic Difficulty:* to be used when there is maladjustment or conflict between husband and wife."

forms which this problem takes are yet to be differentiated. Case-work has not gone farther in this process than to work out a classification satisfactory in meeting the exigencies of the immediate situation, though data are included in the record which might be used as a basis for further classification.

#### THE OBJECT FOR DIAGNOSIS

The next problem has to do with the person who receives the attention of the case-work diagnostician. Most of the diagnostic factors may represent qualities of either husband or wife or both. Distributing the cases in which each factor is related to both between husband and wife, one obtains the data in Table IV.

TABLE IV

OBJECT FOR DIAGNOSIS	TOTAL FACTORS		JEWISH SOCIAL SERVICE BUREAU		UNITED CHARITIES	
	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage
Total . . . . .	5,027	100	2,400	100	2,627	100
Husband . . . . .	3,061	61	1,395	58	1,666	63
Wife . . . . .	1,966	39	1,005	42	961	37

The husband comes in for a greater share of the attributes in the United Charities' cases than in the Jewish group.<sup>1</sup> This difference of 5 per cent may, of course, arise out of the inability of workers of that organization to see the husband because of the large proportion of desertion cases. Yet the mean number of attributes related to the husband (about whom the wife is the chief informant) is 2.2 for the Jewish Social Service Bureau and only 1.8 for the United Charities. But the ratio between husband and wife for both organizations shows an undue proportion for the husband

<sup>1</sup> 2.58 standard errors are 3.6 per cent.

if one may assume a theoretical expectation of 50:50. The observed difference of 12 per cent is some six times 2.58 standard errors and may suggest some basis for the repeated assertion on the part of the men that they do not get a fair deal from the case-workers.<sup>1</sup>

TABLE V

DIAGNOSTIC FACTORS	PERCENTAGE OF PERSONS WITH WHICH EACH FACTOR WAS RELATED		
	Both	Husband	Wife
Abuse . . . . .	19	33	4
Drink . . . . .	17	30	3
Immorality . . . . .	16	13	20
Irregular habits . . . . .	10	17	3
Laziness . . . . .	10	16	3
Affinity . . . . .	9	14	5
Mental deficiency . . . . .	10	9	11
Bad housekeeping . . . . .	.....	.....	17
Nagging . . . . .	7	2	11
Family interference . . . . .	7	4	9
Uncontrolled temper . . . . .	7	9	5
Jealousy . . . . .	4	5	3
Extravagance . . . . .	4	2	6
Physical deficiency . . . . .	4	3	4
Stinginess . . . . .	4	6	2
Venereal disease . . . . .	3	4	2
Sex refusal . . . . .	.....	.....	5
Excessive sex demands . . . . .	.....	5	.....
Slovenliness . . . . .	2	1	4
Children by former marriage . . . . .	2	2	2
Discipline of children . . . . .	.....	.....	4
Evil companions . . . . .	2	3	1
Restlessness . . . . .	1	2	0.3
Age differences . . . . .	1	2	1
Inadequate income . . . . .	.....	2	.....
Sex perversion . . . . .	1	1	0.3
Black sheep . . . . .	.....	1	.....
Religious differences . . . . .	1	1	1
National differences . . . . .	0.3	0.4	0.3

Certain factors are also more characteristics of one or the other of the two persons involved as shown by Table V.

<sup>1</sup> 2.58 standard errors are 1.9 per cent.

The following factors are related to the husband: abuse, drink, irregular habits, laziness, affinity, uncontrolled temper, jealousy, stinginess, evil companions, restlessness, age difference, and sex perversion, each showing a significant higher frequency for the husband as compared to the wife.<sup>1</sup> In addition, three other factors may be considered related to the husband, inasmuch as they appear only in connection with him: inadequate income, excessive sex demands, and black sheep. This brings the total number of factors particularly characterizing the husband's part in the situation to fifteen.

Five factors show significantly higher proportions for the wife and therefore to be considered characteristic of her part in the domestic conflict: immorality, nagging, family interference, extravagance, and slovenliness.<sup>2</sup> Two others having reference to her only may be added: bad housekeeping and sex refusal.

#### ANALYSIS OF DOMESTIC DISCORD

The chief obstacle in the way of a more fundamental diagnosis of domestic discord on the part of case-workers is the lack of a defined drive toward analysis. Part of this may be due to a failure to see the importance of getting at anything more than the immediate problems involved, and part to lack of appreciation of the fact that case-work has not yet worked out a satisfactory system of diagnoses which will serve as indices of treatment techniques to be applied.

<sup>1</sup> 2.58 standard errors are: abuse, 3.6 per cent; drink, 3.5 per cent; irregular habits, 2.8 per cent; laziness, 2.8 per cent; affinity, 2.7 per cent; uncontrolled temper, 2.4 per cent; jealousy, 1.8 per cent; stinginess, 1.8 per cent; evil companions, 1.3 per cent; restlessness, 0.9 per cent, age difference, 0.9 per cent; sex perversion, 0.9 per cent.

<sup>2</sup> 2.58 standard errors are: immorality, 3.4 per cent; nagging, 2.4 per cent; family interference, 2.4 per cent; extravagance, 1.8 per cent; slovenliness, 1.3 per cent.

Case-workers often contend that they do not try to discover causes but that their work is the recognition of problems. This implies either one of two things: (1) that having discovered a problem the method of treatment is available and may be applied without knowing how the problem arose, but simply that it exists, or (2) that each case is unique and may be treated empirically, the data being needed only that sufficient to indicate the problem and define the personality with which one is working. In practice, case-records indicate a fluctuation between these two points of view. The same treatment is ordinarily used in all instances of a particular problem, unless pressure of work or disinclination of the client to follow the worker's advice interferes. But should the accepted treatment fail, more investigation follows, and other treatment techniques experimented with.

Yet the chief problem from the diagnostic point of view is that of differentiating problems either in terms of certain factors which are peculiarly characteristic of certain problems and not of others, or in terms of certain typical combinations of occurrence. It has already been shown that neither has been done in case-work. The factors found are quite clearly of common-sense origin, some being moralistic characterizations such as immorality, evil companions, others describing concrete overt behavior, such as restlessness, sex refusal, and still others indicating concrete descriptions such as mental deficiency, age and religious differences. For the most part, these factors indicate, not an attempt to get at the nature of the discord, but rather to answer two questions uppermost in the mind of the worker, whether consciously recognized or not: (1) Is the husband failing to support his family and so making them liable to become dependents? and (2) Should marriage relations be continued?

The first problem requires that the financial situation be gone into in detail. Relatives must be seen; employers visited; and other evidence accumulated to show the amount of money given to the family. This phase of the situation is, of course, quite essential.

The second problem requires evidence to show what sort of moral character is involved, usually in the man. Thus the case-worker may play the rôle of interpreter of community opinion, or as the leader in community life. "I don't think you can plan to maintain a home with a man like that! You will get in deeper and deeper all the time!" one worker was heard to tell a client. Then there is sometimes the drive to get others to take sides in the controversy.

Too much emphasis, also, may be given to the immediate crisis, which is ordinarily relatively unimportant. A few examples will suffice: "My husband ran me out of the house because he did not like the soup I prepared for him one evening," one wife told the worker. Another wife reported that when she refused to bake a lemon pie, her husband "went into a violent rage, and picked up the furniture and pulled down the pictures." A husband explained the difficulty as follows: "My wife is not lady—would not take care of herself. I gave her money for an abortion but she tricked me and bought new clothes."

The diagnostic procedure in cases of domestic discord, in other words, may be unduly influenced by a moralistic attitude on the part of the case-worker who overemphasizes the efficacy of a verification technique of investigation developed in handling financial problems. The development of a technique of investigation particularly applicable to domestic discord problems, therefore, seems to be needed.



## CHAPTER V

### THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

One of the reasons why the social sciences have not developed as rapidly as have the physical sciences within the last century is the absence of any well-formulated and accepted technique for obtaining data. The social sciences have depended, primarily, upon historical documents and records of casual observations as sources of data for analysis. Part of this backwardness in developing techniques for obtaining objective materials is inherent in the nature of the data themselves. The inapplicability of the experimental technique developed in the physical sciences has turned the attention of social scientists to statistics as a way out of the dilemma. Yet the statistics have to be collected somehow and too often it is found that the method of collection is the nub of the problem.<sup>1</sup>

It has not always been appreciated that the laboratory technique of the physical sciences is not only a method of varying conditions in order to determine the rôle of each factor in the result, but that it is also a device for limiting the field of observation for the experimenter. Thus the laboratory equipment becomes a mechanical means for limiting the range of one's observations. Accordingly, in the social sciences, the questionnaire and the schedule have been developed to serve a similar function.

In case-work, however, because of the personal nature of the contact between the worker and the client, emphasis has been placed upon the interview. It may be, as has been

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Mowrer, *Family Disorganization*, chapter vi, pp. 127-44.

said, unfortunate that so much time had to be spent in developing a technique in the use of which any newspaper reporter is an adept. Yet that technique had nowhere been adequately described making it essential that case-workers either learn it by first becoming newspaper reporters or else work it out for themselves. But that phase of development is past and case-workers are becoming more self-conscious with relation to the interview as something more than a technique of investigation.

#### THE INTERVIEW

From the first the interview has held an important place in the process of diagnosis in family case-work. Yet it is only within the last few years that the interview has been thought of as a process of interaction between the interviewer and the interviewed and any attempt made to analyze what takes place.

Three types of interviews can easily be distinguished: (1) the diagnostic interview; (2) the research interview; and (3) the treatment interview. Each of these types may have its legitimate place in the work of a family welfare agency. Furthermore, any concrete interview may be, and often is, a combination of two or more of these types.

#### THE DIAGNOSTIC INTERVIEW

The diagnostic interview is one in which the primary purpose is to determine what are the symptoms requisite for treatment of the situation. In case-work terminology, the diagnosis is in terms of problems as has already been pointed out in the previous chapter. Having determined the problems, the treatment is that which is considered adequate or essential by the agency for those particular problems.

This is diagnosis proper. Other types of interviews may contain diagnostic elements, but not exclusively so.

On the whole, the interview in case-work has been looked upon as a technique for securing the necessary information for making a diagnosis of the situation. In fact until very recently, almost the whole of case-work has been embodied in the investigative procedure, if one may judge from the literature in which the only attention given to treatment consists in little more than statements of objectives and ideals. Even the organization of data, obtained in the investigation, into diagnostic schemes has received little attention.

The underlying logic of the investigative procedure of case-work, Chapin has stated as follows:

Intelligent treatment of human beings in misfortune rests on a social diagnosis which takes account of the needs, resources and possibilities of each case. The plan of treatment depends upon the collection of evidence and the drawing of inferences therefrom. The social worker gathers this evidence from the client, from his family, and from sources of insight outside the family group. By comparing evidence collected from these sources it becomes possible to draw inferences and intelligently to plan treatment.<sup>1</sup>

The worker is instructed, accordingly, to interview all sorts of persons: (a) the persons themselves, (b) the relatives, (c) doctors and health agencies, (d) schools, (e) employers, past and present, (f) previous residence and neighborhoods.<sup>2</sup> All the evidence must then be weighed as does a judge in a suit of law with due consideration for the types of evidence obtained, (a) the real, (b) testimonial, and (c) circumstantial. To this should be added data which have already been recorded in official documents, such as those of

<sup>1</sup> Chapin, *Field Work and Social Research*, p. 74.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Richmond, *Social Diagnosis*, pp. 132-33.

birth, marriage, police, courts, and other records such as those of hospitals, other social agencies, etc.

To what purpose all these data may be turned is not always clear except that they are necessary for "intelligent treatment." That such data serve as a basis for arriving at some sort of plan for treatment of the immediate situation empirically is attested to by the records of social agencies. Yet it is not uncommon for case-workers to become so engrossed in the investigative procedure as to forget that the point of departure is the individual to whom his ideas and wishes are much more important than the "truth" about which the interviewer is so concerned.

#### THE RESEARCH INTERVIEW

The second type of interview is more closely related to analysis than to diagnosis. Its primary purpose is to obtain data for analysis of the situation in terms of fundamental principles. Artistic interest in the situation often leads the worker unwittingly into this type of interview. Furthermore, the emphasis in case-work circles of recent years upon the need for obtaining background materials has made this type of interview more common than one would expect off-hand. The deficiencies of this type of interview so far as the problem of domestic discord is concerned may be largely attributable to the lack of any idea on the part of the interviewer as to what data are significant and what are not.<sup>1</sup>

The research interview is not, of course, concerned with the practical problems of human conduct. For that reason it is not likely to be much used by case-workers. Yet, so long as case-work is not able to draw its basic principles of analysis from any great body of human documents, it would

<sup>1</sup> See Mowrer, *Family Disorganization*, pp. 184-87.

seem desirable that some attention be given to the research end in the hope that out of this effort more satisfactory schemes of diagnosis might develop and lead to more effective treatment of case-work problems.

#### THE TREATMENT INTERVIEW

The treatment interview has come in very recently for more attention in case-work circles than formerly. The primary purpose of the treatment interview is not to diagnose the case, nor to get data for analysis, though it may do both, but to give treatment. While the older case-work school looked upon treatment either as something to be done by persons in other professions, such as that of medicine; or the mobilizations of force, such as taking court action; or the bodily manipulation of the individuals, such as taking Johnny to the dispensary and moving his family into a more sanitary flat; the new school thinks more in terms of directing the behavior of individuals through verbalization.

In the analysis of concrete treatment interviews such terms as "meeting objections," "catharsis," "coping with attitude," "motivation," "clinching with definite suggestions," have been introduced. The terms used clearly indicate that the type of interview thought of is what may be called the persuasive interview in which the individual is persuaded to do something which he does not want to do at the outset. Such interviews too often show an adaptation of the "high pressure" salesman's technique, especially that of the salesman who contracts for the exchange of goods such as real estate, magazine subscriptions, books, etc. The objective of the salesman is to get one to "sign on the dotted line." Once he has one's signature he can prevent one from changing his mind through court process. It goes without

saying that there are no such means of control in case-work. It is obvious, then, that unless some way is found for introducing factors during the treatment interview which will later result in some fundamental change in the attitudes of the client, the effort will not be successful.

The function of the treatment interview, accordingly, whether in the treatment of domestic discord or of any other problem, is to bring about a change in attitudes of the client and not to get him to perform certain immediate overt acts, though the performance of such acts may be useful in promoting a modification of attitudes if they are spontaneous in origin. The mechanism of suggestion, therefore, is likely to be much more useful than others such as ridicule, arguments, threats, and epithets. And the more indirect the suggestion the greater its effectiveness. When overt acts are suggested, or even sanctioned, they should be, perhaps, of the sort which on the surface seem unimportant, but which by summation commit the client to a course of behavior he cannot later abrogate because to do so would involve a complete breakdown of his personal organization.

#### NEED FOR MORE OBJECTIVE APPROACH

It may be that much of the general feeling of hopelessness in the treatment of domestic discord by case-workers is due to the absence of an objective approach. On the whole, the case-worker's approach, according to Harriet R. Mowrer, is subjective in two respects: (*a*) a tendency to read into the data one's personal biases, and (*b*) the dependence upon unconscious factors for determining the technique of the interview.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The author does not claim any originality for the point of view expressed subsequently, relative to the technique of the interview. The sections which follow represent an adaptation from a manuscript on "The Tech-

It is not uncommon for workers to read into cases what they think they know to exist. For example, a worker who believes that nagging wives and drinking husbands are the chief causes of domestic discord, records the following: "Mr. H. practically admits that his wife's nagging is the basis of their difficulty."

Workers ordinarily enter into an interview with little thought about how it is to be conducted, depending upon the personality of the client and the exigencies of the moment to determine the procedure. Thus in attempting to play the rôle of an umpire she often finds herself in that of a belligerent outsider, at least in relation to one person in the conflict if not to both. The investigative procedure thus tends to take the form of the legal or contentious method in which one person is interviewed, certain data obtained, then checked up with statements of the other, the usual formulas being: "Your wife told me so and so; is that true?" and "Your husband said you are so and so; are you?"

In such an interview the data obtained usually concern the crisis situation which brought about a break or the things which husband and wife quarrel about. The implication is that if one can determine the truth in the matter the difficulty will be more easily solved. In fact it is often assumed that to arrive at the truth will in itself furnish a solution.<sup>1</sup>

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nique of the Interview in Domestic Discord Cases" by Harriet R. Mowrer, Consultant in Domestic Discord, the Jewish Social Service Bureau of Chicago.

<sup>1</sup> Of recent years psychoanalysis has furnished a justification for the generally accepted procedure in interviewing of allowing the client to get his story out of his system as quickly as possible. This is embodied in the principle of catharsis. According to this assumption the client is an emotionally pent-up individual because of a crisis situation. The function of the case-

A more objective approach, according to this point of view, would include at least two things: (*a*) a more definite conception of what are essential data for the analysis in any case of domestic discord, and (*b*) the following of a definite procedure in securing these data in the interview process.

What may be considered essential data for the analysis of domestic discord cases from the standpoint of social interaction may be indicated: (*a*) Environmental influences for husband and wife before marriage and of both together after marriage. Of these, neighborhood influences and the family organization may be taken into account. (*b*) Hereditary influences which may be thought of as both physiological and social. Under physiological hereditary influences would come what are ordinarily called physical and mental. Social heredity may be thought to consist primarily of previous marriages, family, and cultural patterns. (*c*) Social interaction after marriage between the family and the community and between members of the family itself of which that between husband and wife is of most importance. Chief of the factors in adjustment and conflict in each instance would be: (1) economic, (2) health, (3) sex, (4) cultural, and (5) pattern of life. Then concluding with the rationalizations of husband and wife.

For carrying out a definite procedure of securing these data in the interview Harriet R. Mowrer has formulated the following general rules of procedure: (1) A controlled situation. The interview should not be allowed to ramble. If the

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worker is to draw out the pent-up emotions. Once drawn out the person can function normally. In most cases of domestic discord, however, the client has already "let out" on the neighbors. The case-worker seldom gets the case at the height of the emotional crisis. More often the emotion is resurrected to secure the sympathy of the case-worker.



worker cannot control the interview (that is, the behavior of the person in an artificial situation, the office) later control of the behavior (whether of husband or wife) in family interaction is impossible. (2) Analysis of the interview as it progresses. Worker should continually analyze the interview as it progresses, for the purpose of arriving at a tentative explanatory hypothesis and for making the interview more pertinent to the type of case. Even though an interview be very carefully planned in advance, it may, and usually does, afford opportunity for greater control than had been anticipated. (3) Interview with husband for the purpose, not of checking up, but to verify an explanatory hypothesis arrived at in the interview with the wife, and to secure more data.<sup>1</sup> The interview with the husband is thus more highly controlled than that with the wife which has preceded.

#### FIRST STEP IN THE INTERVIEW

The first step in the diagnosis of a case of domestic discord from this point of view is to interview each person separately. There seems to be a tendency in case-work to interview both at the same time. It may be questioned whether or not such a procedure is ever warranted. The usual result is to provoke both to make recriminations which only interfere in the adjustment process. It is expecting too much, perhaps, to ask two persons who are angry at each other to give a rational account of their troubles in the presence of each other.

The interview should be held in an office which is orderly and business-like. There should be the utmost privacy and all the information obtained should be considered confiden-

<sup>1</sup> This, on the assumption, of course, that the wife made the original complaint. Either person may be interviewed first, though in practice it is more commonly the wife rather than the husband.

tial. That metaphysical thing, "truth," which gives case-workers so much concern may be relegated to oblivion with the dodo. There is little need, accordingly, to check up on what one says about the other except in so far as different parts of the interview serve as checks upon other parts. Under no circumstances should anything be said to indicate to either one what the other has told.

The interview, of course, should not be allowed to take its own course. It should be directed at every turn and always be within the control of the interviewer. If the interviewer has no prestige in the eyes of the interviewed and she is not able to build up that which is wanting early in the interview, the case had better be turned over to another for treatment.<sup>1</sup>

Case-workers ordinarily allow the client to tell his story first and then obtain routine data later. There seems to be considerable evidence, in fact, to indicate the need for reversing the process. According to this point of view, data upon the early development of the personality should be obtained first, then data related to interaction between the person and his environment after marriage, followed by data on the interaction between husband and wife and finally the way in which one rationalizes his conflicts in marriage

<sup>1</sup> In the treatment of domestic discord, as in the treatment of any other problem in case-work, it is necessary that the worker have prestige in the eyes of the client. If she has no prestige she will have little control over the situation. She may, and often with success, be democratic in her attitude toward the client. Yet she should not allow her relations with the client to become personal. Response to or compliance with her suggestions, for example, should not be presented as favors to herself or as an exchange for favors. Neither should the worker thank the client for doing things which are for his own benefit. The worker who takes the attitude that the client is doing her a favor by coming in upon request will be in no position to get the client to do for himself the things which seem necessary for his rehabilitation.

relations. These latter data are found in many instances to constitute the most significant portion of the interview, though they are not to be given the usual literal interpretation toward which case-workers are sometimes inclined. Such explanations as the interviewed give do not "explain" in any sense the domestic discord situation, but in the hands of a clever analyst they furnish invaluable diagnostic data. It should be obvious that if the persons themselves knew why they were quarreling they would not need to come to the case-worker to be told. The function of the interviewer is to discover the causes and to relate them to the life-history of the interviewed.

Some of the advantages of securing the information in the order indicated have been pointed out by Harriet R. Mowrer in the paper referred to: (1) Most individuals talk about their early life and community contacts with less reserve than of their more intimate contacts within the family circle. (2) Proceeding in this way the individual is able to tell his story from a more detached point of view than were he allowed to discuss the immediate situation toward which he has too many emotional conflicts to express himself intelligibly. (3) Following this line of procedure, the individual is often able for the first time to see his life-process as a whole. This is particularly valuable since it constitutes one of the first steps in treatment. (4) This sequence of inquiry also facilitates analysis on the part of the case-worker in more fundamental terms than a description of even the same data in the reverse order would give. (5) But ordinarily if the person is allowed to talk about the immediate situation first, he either refuses to give other information or becomes impatient when asked to. (6) And finally in going over the past history of the person, the worker almost

always strikes upon some phase of the individual's life toward which he has a highly emotional reaction. This can be utilized later in the interview as a point of transfer when one attempts to get at data about which the person is more reticent.

#### DIAGNOSIS OF DOMESTIC DISCORD

The diagnosis of domestic discord may be thought of, then, as a process of interaction between the case-worker and the couple involved in domestic conflict. The process of the interview may, and often does, take the form of both diagnosis and treatment. The treatment process, however, will have to be carried in most cases beyond the initial contact, while the diagnosis may be completed at that time. It is also desirable, and perhaps imperative for the present, that each case be approached with a certain amount of research attitude as well.

When a case is presented for diagnosis it should be kept in mind that one is dealing with a multitude of forces all of which are related in some way to the problem. First, each person has had an independent past in which his personality became defined in the interaction between himself and his environment—including other persons as well as physical forces. Second, with the beginning of courtship, the two persons have been in interaction upon a new plane, so to speak, with each other, though each still in interaction with his environment. The result of this interaction between each other has been the definition of the family. Conflicts threatening the dissolution of this unity constitute what may be called domestic discord. The diagnostic problem presented is to get at the nature of this conflict in order that it may be dissolved, or at least minimized to such an extent that it no longer threatens the continued unity of the family.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE PROCESS OF DIAGNOSIS

While a mechanistic analysis of human behavior, i.e., explainable in terms of cause-and-effect relationships, has been generally accepted for more than two decades<sup>1</sup> by those who have given it close study, case-work is still dealing with human conduct in terms of common sense. The psychology of common sense is that which was accepted by psychologists of another generation. It is a psychology of faculties wherein the personality was broken up into concrete bits, attributes, or qualities, somewhere localized in a part of the brain or body. These faculties were thought to be under the control of another faculty, the will, which arbitrarily decided a course of behavior.<sup>2</sup> Diagnoses, accordingly, are chiefly in moralistic terms.

The type of diagnosis generally current may be illustrated by citing excerpts from letters written to other agencies by workers:

The difficulty between Mr. and Mrs. P. is based upon sexual incompatibility, Mrs. P. having a great physical aversion for her husband, who is of an autocratic nature, not comprehending this phase of his wife's behavior.<sup>3</sup>

"Social Diagnosis. Mr. and Mrs. W.—married five years, had one child—man peddled soap. Complications due to sex incompati-

<sup>1</sup> McDougall's *Introduction to Social Psychology* was published in 1908, but it had been preceded by such mechanistic treatments as Cooley's *Human Nature and the Social Order*, Baldwin's *Social and Ethical Interpretations*, Ross's *Social Control*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Bernard, *An Introduction to Social Psychology*, pp. 158-70.

<sup>3</sup> Case No. 1360.

bility—domestic difficulty due to insufficient earnings—man was satisfied that he could do no more because of his defective vision—man had uncontrollable temper—struck his wife—would break furniture and dishes—illiterate. Woman uncontrollable temper—had no sympathy for husband—was self-pitying—could read and write English—thought she was mentally far above her husband—refused marital relations because of man's treatment of her and because he did not earn sufficiently. Was very impatient with husband.<sup>1</sup>

Discussion of problems: A. Economic—While in the beginning Mr. G. realized he must make concessions because of the difficulty of finding a wife and a mother for three children and was liberal with money, he did not keep up the economic standard. Mrs. G. was evidently a poor manager and utterly unprepared to be a guide to three children who had already gone through a disorganized period. Mr. G. could not judiciously advise or help his wife and was pressed by her large demands on his pocket. His repeated leaves were the result; he gambled occasionally, which complicated matters. B. Sexual—Mrs. G. evidently makes greater demands and Mr. G. takes advantage by staying away. Mrs. G. believes that she can enforce return to normal conditions through fear and by pressing matters legally. C. Defective family relations—Mrs. G. is anxious to have home re-established, but prefers militant tactics and is encouraged by her attorney, who lacks social insight. Mr. G. is inclined to gamble, and is given to liberal gestures, but is not dependable in his obligations of debts. He is facing a difficult situation now and believes himself the most injured. Although he refuses to consider reconciliation, he may come around to the plan, and in that case a detailed plan of treatment may be tried. . . .<sup>2</sup>

These excerpts illustrate the general tendency in case-work to explain social maladjustments in terms of qualities or attributes which are thought to reside somewhere in the organism. Such qualities are ordinarily described in moralistic terminology, though of late a few non-condemnatory terms have crept in from medicine and psychiatry.

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 1545.

<sup>2</sup> Case No. 1638.

Unfortunately, such terms are taken to refer to static units which are generally assumed to be inherited rather than indicating a functional relationship between the organism and the environment. This usage vitiates most of the potential advantages of discarding a moralistic terminology. What is needed, accordingly, in the diagnosis of domestic discord, as with other social problems, is some scheme wherein the terms used indicate some sort of functional relationship between the various forces and pressures taken into account.

#### DIAGNOSTIC VS. ANALYTICAL FACTORS

Theoretically, the analysis of domestic discord may be carried on in terms of what may be called diagnostic factors or in terms of analytical factors. That is, the situation represented by a case of domestic discord may be summarized in terms of concepts indicating developed control techniques, or in terms of concepts belonging to a system of explanatory formulas which draw their justification from the logical completeness of the system rather than indicating control processes.

The usefulness of any diagnostic scheme, however, depends upon the degree to which analysis of any particular condition has been carried. In fact, to use a diagnostic system involves having already at hand such an analysis as is fairly satisfactory as the basis for treatment and which may therefore be couched in the more static terminology of a diagnostic scheme. At the present state of development of the treatment of social maladjustments, it seems likely that the best results will come from avoidance of the usual diagnostic absoluteness and the dependence instead upon a more general analysis as a guide to treatment. A diagnostic sys-

tem always tends to be a closed system, while an analysis always tends to be incomplete in some respects, often raising more problems than those which it settles.

Perhaps one of the most instructive attempts in the direction of a more objective approach to the diagnosis and treatment of domestic discord may be seen in the work of Harriet R. Mowrer already referred to (see pp. 58 ff.).<sup>1</sup> Here a group of cases, all of which had been known to the organization for some time, were diagnosed and treated with success (see p. 217). Through a series of interviews in each case, a picture was obtained of the genesis of domestic discord between husband and wife in terms of interaction between the two persons and between them and their environmental situations. The diagnosis took the form of an attempt to conceptualize the functional relations between the various forces in the changing situation in such a way as to be useful as a basis for carrying out a program of treatment. The following case is one of this group and shows the type of data secured and how an analysis was made upon the basis of these data.

#### THE XYSTER CASE<sup>2</sup>

10-28-26 Mrs. X. in office complaining of domestic difficulty with her husband. Mrs. X. is not working at present.

11-4-26 Visited Mrs. X.

11-11-26 Visited Mr. Y., brother of Mrs. X.

12-6-26 Interviewed Mr. X. in office.

} and secured the following information:

<sup>1</sup> Other recent attempts have been made to work out techniques of treating domestic discord more objectively and thoroughly, such as those of Professor Ernest R. Groves and of Dr. G. V. Hamilton. All three have much in common in that each calls attention to the need for more painstaking analysis prior to any attempt at treatment.

<sup>2</sup> Harriet R. Mowrer, "Analysis and Treatment of a Case of Domestic Discord" (manuscript).



## ENVIRONMENT PRIOR TO MARRIAGE

Mrs. X. spent her childhood in Russia, coming to the United States in 1904. From that time until her marriage in 1917, she lived on the near west side in a Jewish Community of first settlement.

## FAMILY ORGANIZATION

Mrs. X. is next to the youngest of a family of four children, two girls and two boys. The mother died about ten years ago, the father about five years ago. The parents got along well together but always had rather a difficult time financially. The father "never made enough" and the children had to assist as early as possible. The mother often complained of the inability of her husband to make a sufficient income.

None of the children have married except Mrs. X., although all are considerably past the marriageable age. An older sister is an agent for the Cosmopolitan Life Insurance Co. A younger brother works as a jewelry repairer. An older brother, who makes his home with the family, owns a small leather shop at 1400 Blue Island Avenue.

Mrs. X. has been throughout her married life in close contact with her relatives. Her brother Joseph has made his home with the family for seven years. Her sister has lived with them for short periods of two to three months during the past five years.

Mr. X. is the youngest of 3 children. When he was about one year old, his mother became ill. His father at that time gave him to a woman who lived in a small village near Odessa, Russia. This woman, a few months later, went to Odessa to visit her sister and at that time left the child on a doorstep. She then wrote a letter to the father, telling him that his son had died of scarlet fever, which was prevalent at the time. The "city of Odessa" gave him to a Mrs. Z. to rear and paid for his care. At the age of 13 he went to work.

## CULTURAL PATTERNS

Mrs. X. attended school about a year in this country. She liked school but had to quit and go to work. Prior to her marriage, she worked 7 years as a candy dipper at Bickner Bros. for \$12 a week.

Before coming to this country, her father was a writer of scrolls. In America he always had a job as night watchman.

Mrs. X. before her marriage worked hard according to her brother. "She never went to places like other girls." She contributed her share toward the upkeep of the home. She was anxious to get married (that is, she complained that other girls were getting married and she had no home of her own). Mr. X. was the only man she knew. The family were rather anxious that she marry him and were present at the wedding.

Mr. X. was a cabinet maker in Europe. He had no formal education. He can read and write, and speak English.

SOCIAL INTERACTION—FACTORS IN ADJUSTMENT AND CONFLICT  
BETWEEN FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

1. *Economic*

Mr. X. has worked as a salesman in a 2nd hand furniture store at 3813 S. Wabash Avenue, for the past four years, earning about \$35 to \$40 a week. (Verified—visit 11-8-26.) About three years ago he quit his position saying that the company wanted him to work as a repairer for \$30 a week. At that time he said he was anxious for a store of his own. During the past year he has often expressed this wish, saying "I am tired of always working for someone else. I am not getting anywhere (that is, I always have to take orders from someone else)."

Mr. X. has always worked either as a cabinet maker or a furniture salesman. He is now salesman for the United Furniture Store at 2000 W. Harrison Street.

2. *Cultural Factors*

Mrs. X. does not belong to any club. She has several "girl friends" (that is, about two who come and see her). All of them are better situated than she is (that is, they say their husbands give them \$40 and \$50 a week).

Mr. X. belongs to the Laborers Circle and two other lodges—she does not know the names of them. He is "a great man for his lodges and does not come home until 12 or 1 o'clock from the meetings." (That is, this occurs once or twice in two weeks.)

Mr. X. never attends a synagogue, saying "that he is away from such things." Mrs. X. attends on holidays.

### 3. *Health*

None of the members of the family complain of any illness. Mrs. X. has had little contact with doctors except for pre-natal care.

### 4. *Pattern of Life*

Mrs. X. depends upon others to make decisions for her (that is, she is highly suggestible).

Mr. X. expresses a feeling of inferiority in all circumstances. He is anxious to be thought of as a "good fellow." He is not inclined, however, to worry about things.

## FACTORS IN ADJUSTMENT AND CONFLICT WITHIN FAMILY GROUP

### 1. *Economic*

The couple have, upon numerous occasions, quarrelled about money (that is, Mrs. X.'s brother has continually told Mr. X. that he should secure a job which paid more. He has always earned \$35 or \$40 a week.) Mr. X.'s reply was "I am doing the best I can but I could make more if I just had a store of my own."

Mrs. X. has repeatedly told her husband that the only way she has been able to get along is by her brother's paying the rent (that is, he pays \$12 a week for room and board, but, according to Mrs. X., that is practically paying the rent as she uses the money for that purpose). Her brother gives the children presents of mittens, stockings and toys. He is fond of the children and probably enjoys giving them these articles. But a quarrel usually results, Mrs. X. telling her husband "why is it my brother has to buy these things for your children—a great father you are. If it would not be for my relatives, where would we be?"

Mr. X. complains that his brother-in-law and sister-in-law have always said that he did not earn enough money. "My brother-in-law has always acted like he was supporting the family and my wife always acts like she never got anything from me. When I got out of a job, they looked at me like I was a dog. They always looked at me that way."

### 2. *Cultural Factors*

Mrs. X. tells her husband that his family must not have amounted to much (that is, if they had he would not have been left with strangers).

There is something mysterious about his birth and early life; that is, no one knows much about him, not even his guardian).

### 3. *Health*

Mrs. X. had a miscarriage two weeks ago and was in a hospital for ten days. She had one other miscarriage about six years ago.

### 4. *Sex*

Mrs. X. says she has wanted children but does not want any more (that is, three are sufficient for any family). She has never used any contraceptive methods.

Frequency of relations on the average of about twice a week until about a year ago. Since then relations have been less frequent (once a week). Her explanation is that during this period her husband has come home later at night and she has been either too tired or he has not made advances to her.

Mr. X. says that during the last year he has not had relations with his wife as frequently (that is, about once a week).

### 5. *Pattern of Life*

Mrs. X. accepts no blame in the situation.

Mr. X. is younger and smaller in stature than his wife, which may explain somewhat his feeling of inferiority.

## RATIONALIZATIONS

(Person's own explanation of the situation)

*Mrs. X. says:*

"I knew my husband about six or seven months before we were married. We met through a landsman who was a friend of my husband's guardian. I was tired of my work and anxious for a home of my own (that is, I thought that would be easier than working in a factory and helping my folks).

"We had relations at once after we were married and I soon found that I was pregnant. There wasn't anything to do.

"We got along very well except we sometimes quarrelled about money. He always gave me \$30 and \$35 a week, keeping \$5 for himself.

"Then last April my husband brought a woman to the house and introduced her as his sister Sadie. He said they had met through a friend. He asked if I had a room I could let her have. I had.

"Then I began to notice that my husband was so interested in his sister. Sometimes I went to bed at 10 o'clock and then would get up at 12 or 1:00 and find my husband and his sister still talking. Sometimes I saw Sadie on the bed and my husband nearby holding her hand. When I said 'Why do you need to talk so much,' Sadie said 'I used to talk that way to my mother. Now that I have found my long lost brother, I don't get tired of talking to him.'

"Sometimes when we had company, Sadie would put her arms around my husband, kiss him and tell him how happy they are that they had found each other. Then she began to getting up early in the morning to make breakfast for him. When I would wake up at 7 o'clock I found that he had already had breakfast and gone to work.

"Then my brother and sister and the neighbors all said, 'They are not sister and brother. See, they act more like sweethearts.'

"Two weeks later we had a big fuss and Sadie moved from the home. About two months ago she came back. She told me how lonely it was to live alone in a room and what a shame it was that she could not live in her own brother's home. I felt sorry. We kissed and made up. She came back to live with us. I thought maybe things would be all right but they started acting the same. Whenever I said anything, there would be a quarrel. On 10-28-26 I could stand it no longer and said Sadie would have to move. My husband said, 'If she goes, I go.' My brother and sister joined in the fuss, my brother saying, 'You can go, I always supported the family, anyway.' I told him the same thing. Then my husband packed his suitcase, called a taxi and left with his sister. I have not seen him since. I do not know where he is living. My brother is taking care of us. He says he will not have my husband in the house.

"That woman is the cause of all the trouble. She even sewed on his buttons and washed his shirts. She is no sister."

*Mrs. X.'s brother says:*

"Mrs. X. as a girl never depended on herself. She never knew her own mind. I always had to settle matters for her. She never knew what she wanted to do from one day to the next.

"I have lived with the family 7 years. Before the death of my father he lived with them too. My sister has always wanted us close by and has depended upon us more than her husband. I have paid

the rent year after year (that is, \$12 a week room and board). I have given the children presents. Mr. X. has never neglected the children, but never bought them anything but the essentials.

"Mr. X. never made sufficient money (that is, other men make more). I have grown to dislike him more and more. I have no respect for him (that is, he earns so little). I won't have him in the house. I want him arrested and in jail."

*Mr. X. says:*

"I married my wife because she was anxious to marry me and I was anxious to get married. She is 8 years older than I am but that didn't make any difference at that time (that is, I was old for my age and had had more experience). We got along very well at first. Then her folks started interfering. Whenever I spoke of getting my own business, her brother said, 'You are not a business man. What will you do with a business?' At the time we were married, my wife had money. I don't know how much. Her brother borrowed \$300 from her to start in business. When I wanted to borrow money to start and buy a store, she said, 'You stay where you are. You are no business man so don't try to be something you aren't.'

"I worked late (that is until 9 and 10 o'clock except one evening a week). I had to eat in the restaurant part of the time. When I went home I had to eat alone on the edge of the table. My wife, children and brother always had their meal at 6 or 7 o'clock.

"When I found my sister I was very happy. I had always worried about my family. I never cared about the folks who brought me up. They were paid for 'bringing me up.' I always knew they were not my own folks and early made up my mind to go my own way.

"In March of last year a friend of mine, Albert Youngquist, a landsman of mine and a member of the Workers' Circle, told me that he thought he had found my family for me. He said my sister was working in the same shop and he would introduce us. We met and I found out that my other sister was here too (Mrs. Ada W., 1800 N. Wood Street, husband owns a delicatessen), and that my mother is in Roumania. We compared names of relatives. My sister showed me pictures, etc., and wrote to my mother. We have been writing since then and my wife has received letters from her. My sister Sadie has been in this country three years.

"Then I brought my sister to the home. My wife got jealous (that

is, her brother and the neighbors started telling her that she was not my sister). She was so touchy (that is, one time I could not find a clean shirt so my sister washed one out. My wife flew mad about this and we had a big fuss). Mrs. X.'s sister and brother were always against me and my sister.

"I felt just like a boarder in the house, not like a husband. I ate my meals alone. My brother-in-law even took out my children on Sunday. He told my wife what price flat she should move into. They looked at me like a dog.

"I won't go back unless I can be more than a boarder in my own home.

"She never complained of having children until a few months ago. Then I went and bought a —— [a certain contraceptive device]. I used this once but I did not like it and put it in my pocket. My wife found it and accused me of having used it with my sweetheart, meaning my sister, and made a big fuss and kept on harping about it.

"During the last year we haven't lived together much (once a week). Sometimes when I wanted to, she made an excuse that she was too tired. She often slept in a dirty apron. It does not give a fellow much satisfaction to have a wife like that—just like a dead body, no life. I can't make her act any different."

#### ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

In analysis of this case the following factors are to be considered:

1. Husband's feeling of inferiority.
  - a) Uncertainty of parentage.
  - b) Disparagement on part of wife and family. (Example, incapable of running a business.)
  - c) Boarder rôle in family by husband. (Example, he does not eat with the family. He is told that he does not pay rent and therefore he must be a boarder. Brother's card on the mail box.)
2. Suggestibility of wife.
  - a) Dependence on family, prior to marriage, and dependence upon brother up to this point. (Abnormal in the sense that she was old when married.)
  - b) Presence of father, sister and brother in home (thus heightening wife's dependency).
  - c) Rôle of husband assumed by brother. (Example, buys children

presents, takes children out, pays "rent," he says. Eats with family. Has card in mail box, etc.)

- d) Neighborhood gossip—confirms inferior position of the husband.
- 3. Compensation on part of husband through contact with sister
  - a) Rôle of sister as wife.  
(Example, sister washes shirts, gets breakfast, displays affection, gives brother reassurance.)

This case, accordingly, represents the following type of sequence:<sup>1</sup>

*Type of Case.*—Husband and wife with different conceptions of the rôle of the husband (wife looks to her family for advice and leadership and as having final authority. Husband's conception is that he should be the one whom she should consult, i.e., the conventional American "husband" pattern).

*Response Tension.*—Brought to a climax by appearance of husband's sister.

*Compensatory Behavior.*—(1) Attempts of husband to secure recognition (lodge activities). (2) Attempts of husband to secure response in contacts with sister. (3) Breakdown in family unity (jealousy of wife, desertion of husband).

#### THE ANALYSIS OF DOMESTIC DISCORD

The data required for analysis or diagnosis of a case of domestic discord are of three kinds as has been indicated: (1) descriptions of environmental pressures, (2) descriptions of hereditary pressures or forces, and (3) descriptions of the integration of personality in the interaction between the two types of pressures. Since, however, the problem is that of conflict between husband and wife, only those phases of these types of data which are involved in the conflict need to be taken into account. A complete analysis of domestic discord would, of course, necessitate a complete description of all phases of each person's life-history, but for purposes of diagnosis and treatment, this may be abbreviated very greatly. The degree to which this abbreviation may be

<sup>1</sup> See Mowrer, *Family Disorganization*, chap. x, pp. 216-29.



carried can be determined only by the pragmatic test of what data are necessary as a basis for effective treatment.

Each individual to a marriage union continues to be in interaction with his environment "upon his own," so to speak, such relations conditioning his contacts with his marriage-mate. There is also the interaction between the environment and the family as a unit to be taken into account. Further, upon a different and more intimate plane, there is the interaction between husband and wife which is the center of interest. The problem is to relate all the conditioning factors, the environmental and hereditary pressures upon each individual prior to marriage, the environmental pressures upon each other after marriage and upon them as a marriage-unit, to the interaction between husband and wife in this more intimate plane of relations.

All these data, except those under "Rationalizations," should be in the third person (except for illustrations) and as objective as possible. The source may include a wide variety of contacts, but for practical purposes may be limited to the immediate family. "Rationalizations," however, should be in the first person and as nearly verbatim as is practicable. These furnish the basis for interpreting the meaning of the data recorded in the rest of the record in terms of the person's expressed attitudes and wishes.

The implications of this approach are: (1) that the concrete conflict situation is only symbolical of the discord, (2) that a description of the situation as viewed by an outsider is incomplete because it leaves out of account the meaning content of the persons themselves, (3) but that combining the two the analyst is able to reconstruct the situation in such general terms as to indicate the causal sequences, or relations. Having accomplished this purpose one is ready to proceed to the treatment of the case.



### PART III

## TREATMENT OF DOMESTIC DISCORD



## CHAPTER VII

### THE PROBLEM OF TREATMENT

Social therapy, as has been pointed out, has to do with the process of promoting a more efficient adjustment of the individual to other individuals and to his physical environment. Maladjustment is measured, of course, in terms of the minimum standards of the group, whether the relations be economic, cultural, moral, or what not. The problem of social treatment is to correct these maladjustments.

Social therapy in this sense is not coterminus with social control. In fact the term social control includes what has already been called social reform and social treatment. The point of reference in social treatment is always the individual organism. Yet this does not imply a conception of the individual as over against the group but is merely the pragmatic approach to control. In this respect the position of the social therapist is comparable to that of the medical therapist.

The chief problem presented to the medical therapist is that of treating disease, though obviously there are such things as gun-shot wounds, cuts, and bruises, which are not necessarily included under this concept. The disease concept, accordingly, is to the medical therapist what individual maladjustment is to the social therapist.

### INCIDENT OF MALADJUSTMENT

There are in medicine two theories explaining the incident of disease, the germ theory and the resistance theory, the first of which many of the profession accept almost to

the exclusion of the other. In the popular mind this is the only theory taken into consideration. And the popular mind has taken its cue from the medical profession, at least from that portion of the fraternity engaged in public health.

The germ theory is based upon findings which show a high concurrence between the development of disease and the increase in numbers of micro-organisms. The pathologists have differentiated a large number of these micro-organisms and found them associated with certain maladies. This has led to widespread attempts in public health to prevent the incubation of these germs in individuals or other media and to insure that when they are incubated they will not be carried to other individuals, through direct or indirect contacts. It is assumed that if measures can be taken to insure that the germs do not get to the individuals, either by elimination of them entirely, or else by preventing them from being transported, the diseases which they cause will be eliminated.

The resistance theory in medicine takes the individual as its focus and assumes that the presence of a "germ" is only one factor in the incident of disease, whereas the advocates of the germ theory tend to assume that the presence of the germ is the all-important factor. Advocates of the resistance theory tend to assume that the germs found associated with certain diseases are always present. Whether an individual succumbs to the activities of these micro-organisms depends upon his resistance. Resistance is taken to be a combination of factors making up the vitality of the individual or the proper functioning of the organism. It is assumed that long periods of efficient functioning of the organism tend to build up a drive in the direction of continued proper functioning in a manner similar to that where habits

are built up which determine one's behavior in a certain direction unless overthrown by unusual circumstances. According to the resistance theory, then, if the organism is functioning properly otherwise, the presence of these micro-organisms, germs, will not cause a disease, but they will be eliminated as are other materials not useful in the building-up of bodily tissues.

Resistance is not, of course, taken to be a single factor, but rather a combination of factors within the organism. The problem of therapy from this point of view, then, is that of strengthening one's resistance. Treatment is in terms of the individual organism and has to do with the introduction of certain factors such as medicine, antitoxins, curtailment of diet and behavior, in such a way as to stimulate the organism to proper functioning.

Carrying the analogy a step farther, it is apparent that individual maladjustment may be explained by a theory very much like that of the resistance theory in medicine. The social order remains constant, but the effect it has upon the individual varies. Some individuals, because of peculiar situations, show evidence of falling below the minimum standard of functioning in relationship both to their physical and social environments. It is with this group that the social therapist is concerned, and his method has to do with making such changes in these maladjusted relations as will bring the individual into a normal functioning relationship.

#### TREATMENT AS SOCIAL VALUE

Treatment may be looked at from two points of view: (1) as a social value, or (2) as a test of hypotheses. As a social value, treatment is for the purpose of producing a condition which the group considers desirable. That is, the

purpose of treatment is to reorganize the lives of the maladjusted individuals in such a way as to bring them within the standards and demands of the group. If the standard of living is below that which the group considers desirable, then it must be raised. If the conduct of the individual is not in conformity with the customs of the group, then that individual must be made to conduct himself as the group would have him.

The final authority, thus, in determining the direction of treatment is the group. It matters not what the individual may want, or think he wants, for if his wants are contrary to the ideals of the group then he must be made to see the efficacy of those ideals and to want them also. Neither is the social therapist the judge of the end, but only of how the end may be obtained. Just as the medical therapist does not ask himself when he is called in to treat a "gangster" for appendicitis, if the person is worth saving, so the social therapist cannot be moved in his attempt to relieve the poverty of an individual by considerations as to whether or not the patient will be happier or less happy in his new situation. Treatment in every case is toward realizing those ends which the group deems desirable.

#### TREATMENT AS A TEST OF HYPOTHESES

The second point of view from which treatment may be approached is that of testing hypotheses. The distinction between different systems of analysis lies in the degree to which one is useful and the other is not. That is, does one system make it possible to predict, and hence control, what is to follow more accurately than another? If so, then that system which stands the pragmatic test is the better and therefore more true than the other.



The method of analysis of human behavior, then, which is acceptable in any sense is that which is useful. It must stand the pragmatic test by being of service as a basis for treatment. So the social therapist need not become a prophet nor even a high priest. Treatment may be viewed by him as a laboratory method of testing his theories against the hard reality of life.

#### TREATMENT OF DOMESTIC DISCORD

Recognition of domestic discord as a problem for treatment is not new. It has long been recognized that individual impulses of husbands and wives are not always conducive to the continuance of the marriage relationship and that the intervention of an outsider is needed to prevent breaks. Certain techniques, accordingly, have been worked out for dealing with these critical situations. These techniques are, for the most part, rule-of-thumb procedures, yet they may be classified in terms of approach as: (1) religious, (2) legal, and (3) case-work.

The essence of the religious approach is the assumption of sin as the primary factor in thwarting the desires of the individual for marital happiness. The technique for handling cases, so far as any technique has developed, consists, in general, in pointing out to the individuals how one or both have sinned. If both persons do not equally respond to the treatment, the one who does is admonished to overlook the sins of the other and to pray that he will change, i.e., recognize his sins and repent. Attempt is often made also to direct the interests of the couple into other channels which lead to a transcendental plane, whether in terms of another world or of the present.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Mowrer, *Family Disorganization*, pp. 278-81.

## THE LEGAL APPROACH

The legal approach is in terms of contractual rights. This concerns chiefly two phases of relationship, the physical and the economic. The law forbids overt acts of cruelty and guarantees the support of the wife and the children by the husband and father by providing punishment in case of commission of the first and omission of the second. Special courts have been organized in some instances for the prosecution of non-support cases. In connection with such courts there is often a department in conjunction for the adjustment of cases without the formality of a court order. Nevertheless, this extra-legal procedure gets its acceptance from the fact that if orders are not obeyed the case can be taken into court. The technique of these so-called "social service" departments, accordingly, is only an extension of the court process. The essence of the legal approach, thus, is coercion.

The usual procedure in such "social service" departments is for workers to interview the complainant and the defendant and then try to work out an adjustment outside of court. Ordinarily no warrant is issued unless the husband refuses to come in for a conference, or threatens to leave the jurisdiction of the court, or, when he does come, refuses to turn over to his wife, either directly or through the court, a specified sum of money each week. The amount to be paid is determined by agreement upon the part of both husband and wife, the worker playing the rôle of mediator, though ordinarily she takes the part of the wife. In this process there is always the threat, either stated or implied—more often the former—that if no agreement is reached the case will be taken before the court.

If a case is taken into court the general chancery procedure is followed. The wife is rarely represented by an at-

torney, though the husband may be and often is. Social workers familiar with the case are given a hearing if they wish it. The chief objective of the procedure is to determine whether the husband is responsible for the situation, and if so, how much he should pay to support his wife and children. Or should he be punished for failing to support them in the past? In general practice the defendant is bullied by the court worker, and sometimes by the judge, in an attempt to get as much support for the wife and children as possible. Little attention is ordinarily given to other factors in the situation, with the result that the defendant generally feels that he has been misunderstood as well as mistreated.

Courts of domestic relations, thus, operate almost exclusively upon the conception of the family as an economic entity. With these courts the chief criterion of the family unity is whether or not the husband supports his family. In the eyes of the court, the husband is responsible for the economic maintenance of the family and in so far as he fails in this the court brings to bear the force of the political organization to coerce him.<sup>2</sup>

#### THE CASE-WORK APPROACH

Social workers, including those connected with family welfare agencies, sometimes use much the same technique as do court workers in treating cases of domestic discord. Almost invariably, however, they have more data upon which to base their treatment than do court workers, but the process of coercion is sometimes present even though they do more than refer cases to courts of domestic relations. Case-work in this aspect is only an extension of the legal arm.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 271-74.

Thus the case-work agency functions as an extension of the police force, initiating the legal process by which members of society are made to conform to the standards of domestic relations demanded by the group. In this rôle the case-worker may proceed directly or indirectly. She may cause the issuance of summons to court or by threat of doing so she may accomplish the same results as would the court, i.e., get regular support for the family from the husband.

The case-worker may, and often does, extend her efforts farther and act as an arbitrator or counselor. In this respect, however, her activities have much in common with those of the courts though the mores generally take the place of codified laws as the guide in decisions, and there is only public opinion to enforce the action taken.

It is in this rôle that the case-worker defines situations in terms of common standards and so establishes, to a degree, the status of the persons by defining the attitude of the community toward them.

Not content, however, with a verbal definition of the situation in terms of group standards, the case-worker sometimes carries the definition to the larger family group and to the community. Thus she is able to render her definitions the more effective by obtaining active participation in them on the part of others. The larger family group, especially, is able to give substance to the case-worker's definition to an extent unknown in court-processes if the group has not become disorganized itself.

In her contacts directly with the couple, themselves, then, the case-worker's technique consists primarily in the art of getting the persons to perform overt acts by ridicule, flattery, bullying, argument, suggestion, and coercion. Just as a child can be got to the dispensary by this technique, so

can husband and wife be got back together where they have separated. And this is the way the case-worker does it. But in the process there is little modification of fundamental attitudes and the crucial situation may, and usually does, remain unchanged. But once husband and wife are back together certain conjectural factors may enter to modify attitudes and an adjustment result therefrom. For example, a child by a former marriage may be the recipient of more attention on the part of the wife than the husband, even leading to sex tension and resulting in the break between the couple. The social worker by her technique succeeds in getting husband and wife back together, though nothing has been done in the process to relieve the sex tension, nor to modify the wife's solicitude for her child. After they are back together the child becomes ill and dies. The illness and death of the child arouse, first, the sympathy of the husband and, secondly, with its death the wife transfers her solicitations, which formerly went to the child, to her husband. The sex tension is relieved and therefore an adjustment. But the rôle of the case-worker has been of importance only in the initiation of the process.

The technique of the case-worker, then, whether exercised in the rôle of the mouthpiece of public opinion, as an extension of the police arm, or as counselor and arbitrator, is essentially that of the primary group. It is effective after a fashion wherever the primary group is still able to restrain the individual from following his impulses. And when it is successful it tends to find expression only in conformity of overt behavior to the dictates of the group, leaving untouched the inner conflicts and tensions.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 274-77.

## CHAPTER VIII

### OUTCOME OF CASE-WORK IN DOMESTIC DISCORD

The work of two agencies has been selected for an analysis of the outcome of case-work in domestic discord problems, not because these agencies are more effective in their treatment than others, nor less effective, but because they are the only ones in the Chicago area which handle a large enough group of cases of domestic discord, and keep the necessary records to make a statistical analysis feasible.<sup>1</sup> These agencies are the United Charities and the Jewish Social Service Bureau.

One should be reminded, perhaps, that the data presented are in general what would be obtained from a study of the records of any other family welfare agency. There are variations between the work of different agencies, it is true, but those variations are of minor importance in comparison to the likenesses. Family case-work has become so standardized in the United States through the operations of the Russell Sage Foundation, the American Association for Organizing Family Social Work, and the National Conference of Social Work, to mention but a few of the forces working toward standardization, that in the main, family case-work is all of one piece. This is true in the treatment of all the problems recognized in family case-work, but it is even more

<sup>1</sup> The Court of Domestic Relations handles a large number of cases, it is true, but the records kept are wholly inadequate and what is contained in them has already been fully analyzed in *Family Disorganization*. The Catholic Charities likewise have many cases, but keep little record of the treatment of domestic discord.

true, perhaps, with regard to the treatment of domestic discord.

A fair sample of records of other organizations handling domestic discord problems were read also and showed no variations of significance from those of the two agencies selected. Examples from these records will be cited in later chapters, but for obvious reasons they were not included in the statistical analysis.<sup>1</sup>

It should be apparent that it is not the frequency with which a particular treatment is used which is of importance, but the effectiveness of the technique whenever it is used. Neither can the "personal equation" of the worker be disregarded, but it is difficult to take such a factor into account in a statistical analysis, and so one must assume that where the work of a large group of workers is analyzed the average will be a close approximation to what would be obtained if the "personal equation" could be subtracted.

#### TREATMENT TECHNIQUES

The treatment techniques appearing most commonly were: reference to Court of Domestic Relations, birth-control instruction, medical examination, psychiatric examination, drink cure, ordering-and-forbidding, auto-suggestion, persuasion, housekeeping instruction, extradition, deportation, and conferences in which husband and wife were brought together.

These methods were used with varying frequency by the two organizations as shown by Table VI.

Differences, however, are not as great as one might ex-

<sup>1</sup> A list of these organizations includes: the Juvenile Court of Cook County, the Juvenile Protective Association, Salvation Army, Illinois Children's Home and Aid Society, Illinois Society for Mental Hygiene, and the Service Council for Girls.

pect. Measured in terms of 2.58 standard errors there are significant differences between the two agencies for the following techniques: Court of Domestic Relations, medical examination, ordering-and-forbidding, housekeeping instruction, and conference.<sup>1</sup> If one can assume that the ratio

TABLE VI

TECHNIQUE	PERCENTAGE BY AGENCY		
	Both	United Charities	Jewish Social Service Bureau
No record of treatment.....	30	29	32
Court of Domestic Relations..	60	67	50
Birth-control instruction.....	2	1	2
Medical examination.....	2	3	1
Psychiatric examination.....	6	5	7
Drink cure.....	0.3	1	0
Ordering-and-forbidding.....	7	1	15
Auto-suggestion.....	0.1	0.1	0.2
Persuasion.....	3	3	5
Housekeeping instruction.....	1	0.3	3
Extradition.....	1	1	2
Deportation.....	1	1	1
Conference.....	9	1	20

between the use of a technique and the recording of it remains constant for the two groups, then these differences indicate variance in the frequency of the use of these five technique and little or none for the remainder.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 2.58 standard errors are: Court of Domestic relations, 6.5 per cent; medical examination, 1.8 per cent; ordering-and-forbidding, 3.4 per cent; housekeeping instruction, 1.3 per cent; and conference, 3.8 per cent.

<sup>2</sup> One cannot, unfortunately, guarantee the validity of this assumption. The United Charities, for example, until recently discouraged their workers from putting into their records what had been said to the clients, while the Jewish Social Service Bureau had no policy of this sort. It is hoped, accordingly, that due account has been taken of this difference in the interpretations of the comparisons between these two organizations which follow. The reader may carry further the interpretation of such comparisons at his own risk!



The most significant differences are those for the Court of Domestic Relations and conference techniques. These differences can be easily explained if one but remembers that the conference technique may serve as a substitute for the Court of Domestic Relations.<sup>1</sup>

Referring a case to the Court of Domestic Relations does not constitute treatment on the part of the case-worker, strictly speaking. Neither does the recording of this contact mean that the case-worker was instrumental in sending the case to the Court of Domestic Relations. In some cases, contact with the Court preceded that with the case-work agency. Neither does contact with the Court of Domestic Relations mean that a warrant was issued. The case may have been handled exclusively by the Complaint or Social Service Department of the Court.<sup>2</sup>

The situation with regard to birth-control or sex-hygiene instruction is similar to that with regard to Court of Domes-

<sup>1</sup> The conference technique is more often used by the Jewish Social Service Bureau than by the United Charities. Further, its use by the Jewish Social Service Bureau antedates by many years that by the United Charities. Whether or not this is generally true, as contrasted between Jewish and non-Jewish agencies, cannot be said, but presumably it is. But the conference technique does not seem to have developed as a conscious attempt on the part of Jewish case-work agencies to adjust conflict in domestic relations more efficiently than previously. To understand the practice it is only necessary to appreciate the suspicion on the part of the Jewish immigrant for all non-Jewish institutions. The Jew developed in the European ghetto a feeling of group solidarity and responsibility. This he carried to America, and still insists upon taking care of his own. Part of this attitude is a feeling that justice cannot be obtained in non-Jewish institutions. So the Jewish case-worker early assumed the rôle of the judge or of the rabbi, and the natural consequence was the conference method of handling domestic discord problems. Court action might follow if the conference was unsuccessful, but not before.

<sup>2</sup> See pp. 86-87.

tic Relations contact. The treatment, properly speaking, is given by licensed physicians, usually not a part of the personnel of the case-work agency. The same may be said of medical examinations, psychiatric examinations, drink cure, and extradition.

Medical examinations are only considered as a technique in the treatment of domestic discord, where there was little doubt but that the purpose of the examination was to determine if there was any organic basis for domestic discord, but not otherwise.

The technique "drink cure" indicates the usual cure given for drink which involves hospitalization. It does not include any attempt on the part of the individual to "taper off," substitute soft drinks, etc.

"Ordering-and-forbidding" as a technique of treatment is the usual coercion method in which the case-worker assumes the rôle of policeman, bully, judge, "father," priest, and threatens court or community pressure if the client does not carry out his instructions.

The "auto-suggestion" technique consists in the presentation by the worker of a formula to the client which he is to repeat as a means of producing the desired result, similar to that of Coué, "Every day in every way I am getting better and better."

Three types of the persuasion technique may be differentiated: (a) appeal to one's will power, (b) appeal to one's fears, and (c) appeal to one's interest and affection for his children. The first takes the form of appealing to a person to discontinue certain practices without making any substitution for them, with the implication that one can change his behavior if he but wills to do so. The second is that where control is attempted by picturing to the indi-

vidual certain consequences which he will inevitably suffer and which he fears, such as punishment, loss of respect of others, etc. The last is in terms of one's interest in the welfare of his children and the respect which he may command from them by doing the thing which the worker suggests.

Housekeeping instruction is rarely given by the case-worker, of course, but by visiting housekeepers sent into the home to teach the wife how to prepare well-balanced meals, keep her house clean and arrange it attractively as a way of eliminating conflict between husband and wife.

Extradition indicates the arrest of the deserter by court process and forcibly returning him to his legal residence, usually for trial and punishment.

Deportation,<sup>1</sup> perhaps, should not be considered a technique of treatment of domestic discord. Yet there are cases in which the wife and family are sent to another city or state, whether in the hope of making some adjustment in the estranged relations between husband and wife or to relieve the agency of further responsibility in the case it is sometimes hard to say.

The conference technique is that in which both husband and wife are called into the office for the purpose of trying to work out between them some sort of compromise or adjustment. Such conferences may include others in addition to the case-worker and the two principals, though not necessarily. The Jewish Social Service Bureau uses this technique much more frequently than does the United Charities, as has already been pointed out. One can find in the records several forms, all of which seem to have arisen by a trial-and-error process out of the first form, that of an interview

<sup>1</sup> In case-work terminology these are ordinarily called transportation cases.

between husband and wife at the same time, with the possibility of others entering into the discussion as well. One may differentiate the following more complex forms: (a) interview of either husband or wife first and then of both together immediately following; (b) interview of husband and wife separately, and then both together; (c) reversing the order and interviewing both first, and then each singly; (d) interviewing both first, then each separately, and finally both together again; and (e) interviewing first one, then both, and then the other.<sup>1</sup>

#### MEASURING RESULTS OF TREATMENT

Much has been said and written in social work circles of recent years about measuring the results of treatment in social work. Little has been done in this direction, however, except with here and there a study such as that of Healy and Bronner<sup>2</sup> and that of Sophie van Senden Theis.<sup>3</sup> The staff of the United Charities spent some time upon such a study recently which will serve to illustrate some of the difficulties involved. This study was selected because reports of it were readily accessible. It is only fair to say that any other study of similar nature would have served as well.

In the study by the United Charities, 574 cases were selected. This number included all "under care" cases closed in November and December, 1923, January and February, 1924—479 in all—and all cases originating in 1923 and still

<sup>1</sup> This should not be interpreted to mean that these forms are recognized by the workers, nor that they have arisen out of conscious efforts to modify the original form in such a way as to make it more effective. On the contrary, each seems to have evolved unconsciously without the worker realizing that she was varying the recognized conference technique of procedure.

<sup>2</sup> *Delinquents and Criminals: Their Making and Unmaking.*

<sup>3</sup> *How Foster Children Turn Out.*

under care in May, 1924, of which there were 95. The purpose of taking these two groups was to make comparison possible between the earlier work and that of the present, it being assumed that for the first group the bulk of the work had been done several years previous to the date of closing. It is obvious that the second sample was entirely too small to give reliable results. It is doubtful, even, if the entire group was large enough for the elaborate analysis which the schedule implied. The monthly reports at this time contained no less than forty possible treatment techniques listed as "services." The problem sheet in use provided for diagnosis in terms of from 25 to 36 problems. Sorts by either problems or services would, thus, give very small groups.<sup>1</sup> The first problem with which one is faced, then, is that of reading a large enough group of cases to yield statistical results.

The problem of how to select cases must next be considered. The method most generally used is that of taking closed cases. The tendency for certain difficult cases to hang on year after year would seem to suggest that this method of selection might bias the sample. Certainly if closed cases are to be taken they had better be distributed throughout the year else certain seasonal factors interfere with the representativeness of the sample. There seems to be no justification, therefore, for the limitation of the United Charities' sample to those cases closed in certain months. The selection of one month, May, for current cases is even less desirable. The alternative seems to be the selection of a sample from those cases current during a particular year, irrespective of whether they have been closed or not, but allowing sufficient

<sup>1</sup> This was realized before the study was completed and so no use was made of the data falling into the many subgroups.

interval between the time of study and the year selected to allow the treatment to become effective.

Having selected the sample, the next problem is that of assembling the data from the case-records. Schedules must be drawn up and filled in from the records. The usual method is to arbitrarily include in the schedule those items which one has reason to believe from casual observation will be found or will prove one's preconceived conclusions. Obviously, one must have a working hypothesis as a basis for determining what sort of data to include but that need not be carried so far as to bias the results. It is better, accordingly, to read a large group of records prior to the preparation of the schedule, making summaries of each in which all the data are recorded which are considered pertinent to the problem. From these summaries, then, a schedule may be constructed. In this study this earlier sample consisted of 530 cases, and it was from these summaries that the schedule was made up.

In the study referred to, the situation at the opening and at the close of each record was summarized under the following heads: economic; environmental; health; education; habits; morals and behavior; recreational; and legal. This was done for the purpose of determining what had been the result of treatment. The person reading the record was also asked to express a judgment as to what treatment seems to have been: efficacious, ineffective, and harmful. Judgments of this sort are notoriously inaccurate unless some objective criteria are set up. Treatment was recorded in the summaries of the opening and closing situations, apparently, though a record was made of other agencies working on the case, and as to whether or not their work was successful or unsuccessful—another judgment. This schedule was used

in the study of 184 cases, a much simpler one being used for the remainder of the 574 cases. Obviously, a sample so small as 184 cases could not be expected to give very accurate results.

The next problem is that of determining to what degree any change in the situation in a particular case is the result of treatment by the social worker. The tendency in such studies is to take all the credit for those changes in the direction one wishes and to deny responsibility for the failures by showing how such failures are due to forces beyond the control of the case-worker. These are usually stated in terms of the absence of the proper agencies necessary for treatment.<sup>†</sup>

It should go without saying that the case-worker cannot take the credit in every case for the beneficial results any more than she must take the responsibility for all the failures, though the failures present a problem for as instructive a study as do the successes. Case-workers, cannot, therefore, shift the burden to others. But even assuming that all the beneficial results may be attributed to the treatment given, then it is necessary that what are taken to indicate these results be adequate. For example, in the study of the United Charities it was found that there were under health problems remedial defects in 71 closed cases and 16 recent cases. Corrections were brought about in 77 per cent of the first group, and 87 per cent in the latter. This was taken to show an extra 10 per cent of correction accomplished in the recent cases. Actually, however, the standard error of the difference for these two distributions is 11 per cent. The observed difference is thus less than the standard error and can be

<sup>†</sup> See Florence Nesbitt, "Cause of Some Failures in the Work of the United Charities of Chicago," *Social Forces*, V (December, 1926), 258-68, for this type of interpretation.

taken to indicate nothing more than a slight fluctuation in the sample.<sup>1</sup>

These are, in general, illustrations of what are typical fallacies in studies of treatment in social work where chief dependence is placed upon incomplete statistical analyses. Some of these defects can be eliminated by careful planning of the study in advance, together with a more complete statistical analysis, but others cannot for the present because of the nature of the data with which one has to deal; namely, those found in case-records. In the analysis of case-records which follows it is hoped that as much error has been eliminated as possible within the limitations of the conditions under which the study was made.

#### SELECTING THE SAMPLE

All cases of domestic discord, i.e., containing the problems of desertion, non-support, domestic difficulty, and separation, current during the year 1925 at the Jewish Social Service Bureau were read as a sample of the work of that agency. The sample for the United Charities contained all cases of domestic discord, i.e., non-support, domestic infelicity, and desertion, current during 1924 and 1925. This selection includes for the United Charities a group of earlier cases, namely, those for 1924, which may be interpreted as not comparable to those of the Jewish organization for 1925.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This error in interpretation was made in a preliminary report and so far as the writer knows has not been published. Yet substantially the same error was made again and again in an article by Scott E. W. Bedford, "The United Charities of Chicago as a Promoter of Health Measures," *Journal of the American Medical Association*, LXXXVII (November 27, 1926), 1851-54.

<sup>2</sup> It should be apparent that these two groups are not comparable if one is interested in gross results. It is doubtful, however, if confining one's samples to the same time period for both organizations would help matters in



Distributions for each year group of the United Charities have been compared, however, and found to be substantially the same. Besides, many of the 1924 cases were also current during 1925 and so the later work was taken into account as well, for the cases were read at some interval after the year for which they were selected. The years selected were determined upon the basis of the following considerations: (*a*) the desire to bring the work to as recent a date as possible, and yet (*b*) to insure that sufficient time had elapsed to give opportunity for the treatment to become effective.<sup>1</sup>

The more important items of identifying data were taken in addition to the diagnosis and treatment. (See schedule.) The status of the domestic situation was indicated both by summaries and in certain stereotyped terms, for the time of recognition of domestic discord and the close of the record which, if the case were current, was taken to be the last contact.

The status of marriage relations at the time of recognition of domestic discord was indicated in terms of whether or not husband and wife were living together at the time; which one had left if they were separated or if one had deserted the other. Separations were thus indicated by describing either husband or wife as "away," meaning that his whereabouts were known, or as "deserted" if his whereabouts were unknown at the time. The closing situation was

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this respect. But since only the relative frequencies of common attributes are the items to be compared, it seems hardly plausible that any bias should enter into the analysis due to whatever differences there are between the time intervals of the two groups.

<sup>1</sup> The average interval was about two years, at which time 16 per cent of the United Charities' cases and 21 per cent of the Jewish Social Service Bureau's cases were still current.

## DOMESTIC DISCORD

## SCHEDULE USED IN STUDY OF CASE RECORDS

*Front:*

Family Name		Husband's		First Name	Wife's	District	Date of first entry
Husb.	Date of Birth	Wife	Country of Birth	Husb.	Nationality	Wife	Occupation of Husband
Date	Present Marriage Place	By Whom?	Dates	Previous Marriages		How Terminated?	
Children by Sex and Date of Birth				Death	Divorce	Religion	Separation
				Husband	Wife	Prot.	R.C.
				Other			
Non-Support	Problems	Domestic Infelicity					
Desertion							
Date of Recognition of D.D.				Whereabouts of Husband Known?		Husband Interviewed?	
				Yes		No	
<p>Phy. Def. H-W..... Ment. Def. H-W..... Drink H-W..... Laziness H-W..... Affinity H-W..... Abuse H-W..... Irreg. Hab. H-W.....</p> <p>Nagging H-W..... Fam. Interf. H-W..... Bad Housekp..... Immorality H-W..... Jealousy H-W..... Evil Comp. H-W.....</p> <p>Unc. Temper H-W..... Restlessness H-W..... Relig. Diff. H-W..... Nat. Diff. H-W..... Age Diff. H-W..... Ven. Dis. H-W.....</p> <p>Slovenliness H-W..... Inadequate Inc..... Exc. Sex Demands..... Extravagance H-W..... Stinginess H-W..... Black Sheep.....</p> <p>Sex Refusal..... Children by former Marriage H-W..... Discipline of Children..... Sex Perversion H-W.....</p>							
<p>C. D. R..... B. C. H-W..... Med. Exam. H-W..... Psych. Exam. H-W..... Drink Cure H-W.....</p> <p>Ord. and Forbid. H-W..... Auto-Sugg. H-W..... Persuasion (a) H-W..... (b) H-W..... (c) H-W.....</p> <p>Housekp. Inst..... Extradition..... Deportation H-W.....</p>							
Date of Last Entry				Closed		Current	
						(p. t. o.)	

## OUTCOME OF CASE-WORK

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**Back:**

[illegible]

described in the same terms with these additional characterizations: continued discord, divorced, no record of discord, and adjustment of discord.

The term "continued discord" was used in all cases in which husband and wife were not living together but each knowing the whereabouts of the other whether there were any contacts or not, but in which there was no divorce or order of separate maintenance. The term was also used to include those cases in which husband and wife were living together and quarreling.

In many cases where husband and wife were living together at the close, there was no evidence of quarreling at that particular time, nor was there any data to show that the conflict previously described had ceased. These were, therefore, characterized as "no record of discord."

"Adjustment of discord" was indicated only in those cases in which husband and wife were living together and, from the data, without conflict for the time being. This was determined, generally, from a statement of the wife, or the husband, or both, to the worker that they were no longer quarreling, or that things were going all right now, or that they were having no trouble, or words to that effect.

#### OUTCOME OF TREATMENT

The outcome in all cases read in terms of the closing situation is shown in Table VII.

The Jewish Social Service Bureau has a higher proportion of adjustments than does the United Charities. The difference for the two distributions exceeds 2.58 standard errors and must therefore be considered significant. Cases ending in no record of discord, however, do not show such a difference, the two percentages being substantially the same

for both groups. Neither is there any substantial difference between the two groups for those cases ending in divorce. For discord, however, the difference is 16 per cent in favor of the United Charities. This difference is about two and one-half times 2.58 standard errors and would occur by chance only once in several billion samples. There is also a substantial difference for desertion—22 per cent—this being in favor of the Jewish Social Service Bureau. The probabilities that this is a chance result are so slight as to be

TABLE VII

OUTCOME	TOTAL		JEWISH SOCIAL SERVICE BUREAU		UNITED CHARITIES	
	No.	Percent-age	No.	Percent-age	No.	Percent-age
Total.....	1,573	100	636	100	937	100
Desertion.....	379	24	68	11	311	33
Discord.....	966	61	450	71	516	55
Divorce.....	78	5	41	6	37	4
No record of discord....	84	5	39	6	45	5
Adjustment....	66	4	38	6	28	3

disregarded. If one combines the classes, desertion, discord, and divorce, as all showing unsuccessful treatment the difference in the percentages for the two groups is 4, which is equal to approximately 2.58 standard errors. This result is, therefore, significant.<sup>1</sup>

The cases handled by the Jewish Social Service Bureau appear, accordingly, to show more adjustments than do those handled by the United Charities. This, however, does

<sup>1</sup> Standard errors multiplied by 2.58 follow: desertion, 5.7 per cent; discord, 6.5 per cent; divorce, 2.9 per cent; no record of discord, 2.9 per cent; adjustment, 2.6 per cent; desertion, discord, and divorce, 4.2 per cent; no record and adjustment, 3.8 per cent; desertion and discord, 4.8 per cent.

not necessarily indicate that there is a difference in the effectiveness of treatment of the two organizations, even though one gives them credit for all the change indicated in the two groups of data. This difference might conceivably be accounted for in terms of certain characteristics of one group of clientèle which differentiate them from the clientèle of the other organization. The culture of the two groups differs for one thing. The Jewish group is homogeneous while that going to the United Charities is heterogeneous. But probably most significant of all is the possibility that the two groups are not comparable in terms of social strata. Or conditions may be such that cases have progressed farther before going to one organization than to the other.

The most striking difference between the two groups is that the husband had deserted in 39 per cent of the United Charities' cases at the time of recognition of domestic discord as compared to 6 per cent for the Jewish group. This alone would account for some difference in outcome, presumably. The largest group of cases at recognition of domestic discord in terms of the descriptive words used is that where husband and wife were both living together. This group of cases should represent more nearly comparable data, it might be expected, for both the United Charities and the Jewish Social Service Bureau than would that of all cases. The outcome for this group is given in Table VIII.

For that group of cases in which husband and wife were living together at the time of recognition of domestic discord, the only appreciable differences in outcome are those of desertion and no record of discord. Cases ending in desertion constitute 8 per cent of the Jewish Social Service Bureau group as compared with 16 per cent of the United Charities group, a difference of 8 per cent which slightly

exceeds 2.58 standard errors. There was no record of discord in 8 per cent of the Jewish Social Service Bureau cases in contrast to only 2 per cent for the United Charities, a difference of 6 per cent which is about 1 per cent more than 2.58 standard errors. Differences for divorce, discord, and adjustment could easily have occurred as fluctuations in the sample.<sup>1</sup>

TABLE VIII

OUTCOME	TOTAL		JEWISH SOCIAL SERVICE BUREAU		UNITED CHARITIES	
	No.	Percent-age	No.	Percent-age	No.	Percent-age
Total.....	569	100	319	100	250	100
Desertion.....	64	11	24	8	40	16
Discord.....	412	72	229	72	183	73
Divorce.....	29	5	18	6	11	4
No record of discord....	30	5	25	8	5	2
Adjustment.....	34	6	23	7	11	4

It may be pointed out that should the group ending in no record of discord be added to the adjustment group, the difference between the percentages for the Jewish Social Service Bureau and the United Charities becomes significant.<sup>2</sup> It is doubtful, however, if the cases in the group ending in no record of discord constitute adjustments, or at least that all of them represent adjustments. An attempt will be made in a later chapter to determine what this group represents.

<sup>1</sup> 2.58 standard errors follow: desertion, 6.8 per cent; discord, 9.7 per cent; divorce, 4.8 per cent; no record of discord, 4.8 per cent; adjustment, 5.2 per cent.

<sup>2</sup> 2.58 standard errors for the combined group equals 6.8 per cent, while the difference is 8 per cent. This indicates that the probabilities are approximately 100 to 1 that this difference would not disappear if more samples were taken from the same universe.

The next largest group is that in which the husband was away at the time of recognition of domestic discord. Table IX shows the distribution for this group between the two organizations.

It is apparent that the only differences worth considering are those where the outcome was desertion or discord. For desertion the difference between the Jewish Social Service Bureau and the United Charities is 5 per cent in favor of

TABLE IX

OUTCOME	TOTAL		JEWISH SOCIAL SERVICE BUREAU		UNITED CHARITIES	
	No.	Percent-age	No.	Percent-age	No.	Percent-age
Total.....	495	100	213	100	282	100
Desertion.....	52	11	16	8	36	13
Discord.....	386	78	172	81	214	76
Divorce.....	27	5	13	6	14	5
No record of discord....	18	4	7	3	11	4
Adjustment.....	12	2	5	2	7	2

the first, but the standard error multiplied by 2.58 is 7.3 per cent. This difference cannot, therefore, be considered significant as it would occur about once in 12 pairs of samples drawn from the same universe. The difference for the cases ending in discord is also 5 per cent. This is approximately one-half 2.58 standard errors and might be expected to occur in every fifth pair of samples. If the two groups are combined for both organizations the proportions become 89 per cent for both.<sup>1</sup>

Standard errors in the remaining groups are so large as

<sup>1</sup> 2.58 standard errors are: desertion, 7.3 per cent; discord, 9.6 per cent; divorce, 5 per cent; no record of discord, 4.5 per cent; adjustment, 3.2 per cent.



to make further comparisons dubious. It would seem, however, that the results presented indicate that differences in the effectiveness of treatment is more a function of the group with which the treatment is carried out rather than of the way in which cases are handled by the organizations.<sup>1</sup> Yet it is generally known that so far as the problem of domestic discord is concerned the Jewish organization makes a much greater effort to deal with the problem than does the United Charities. This observation is substantiated by tables (X and XI) showing the distribution of cases by years of contact and by intensity of contact.

The proportion falling in each of the years' contact groups except for the first, is higher for the Jewish Social Service Bureau than for the United Charities, and in each instance it equals or exceeds 2.58 standard errors.<sup>2</sup> The average years of contact for each case is 4.6 years for the Jewish Social Service Bureau, and 3.2 years for the United

<sup>1</sup> Further proof of this conclusion may be seen in the following table showing the distribution from both organizations in terms of outcome of those cases in which husband and wife were living together at the close of the record:

OUTCOME	TOTAL		JEWISH SOCIAL SERVICE BUREAU		UNITED CHARITIES	
	No.	Percent- age	No.	Percent- age	No.	Percent- age
Total.....	493	100	235	100	258	100
Adjustment.....	64	13	36	15	28	11
No record of discord.....	82	17	39	17	43	17
Discord.....	347	70	160	68	187	72

Here the difference in proportion of adjustments is 4 per cent, but 2.58 standard errors are equal to 7.8 per cent. Thus the observed difference would probably occur as a fluctuation in the sample once in five trials.

<sup>2</sup> 2.58 standard errors for each five-year period of contact are: 0-4, 6.2 per cent; 5-9, 5 per cent; 10-14, 4 per cent; 15-19, 1.9 per cent.

Charities. The standard error of this average has not been computed, but obviously if the differences in proportions for each of the years' contact groups is significant, the average years per case would be also. In terms of this measure, then, more attention is given to cases of domestic discord by the Jewish organization than by the United Charities.

TABLE X

YEARS CONTACT	TOTAL		JEWISH SOCIAL SERVICE BUREAU		UNITED CHARITIES	
	No.	Percent-age	No.	Percent-age	No.	Percent-age
Total. . . . .	1,573	100	636	100	937	100
0-4. . . . .	1,082	69	388	61	694	74
5-9. . . . .	268	17	124	20	144	15
10-14. . . . .	180	10	96	15	84	9
15-19. . . . .	37	2	24	4	13	1
20 and over. . . . .	6	0	4	1	2	0

The next method of measuring the intensity of contact was that of rating each case in terms of a point scale.<sup>1</sup> The results are shown in Table XI.

The differences for each of the three larger groups, viz., 5-9, 10-14, and 15-19, containing 95 per cent of all cases, are all greater than 2.58 standard errors and may be taken as significant. A larger proportion of cases of the United

<sup>1</sup> The items of this point scale are (one point for each item given in record): date of birth of each, husband and wife; country of birth of each, husband and wife; occupation of husband; month and year of marriage; place of marriage; interview of husband; each diagnostic factor (see schedule, pp. 102-3), one point if used in reference to husband or wife, two points if referring to both; each of the treatment techniques, except court of domestic relations, one point when in reference to but one person and two points where used in reference to both; and conference technique of treatment. The total points possible on this scale are, accordingly, 84.

Charities fall in the scale group, 5-9, than of the Jewish Social Service Bureau, while the percentage for each of the two higher groups is greater for the Jewish Social Service Bureau than for the United Charities.<sup>1</sup>

These results suggest the possibility that differences in the proportion of adjustments may be a function of factors

TABLE XI

POINT SCALE	TOTAL		JEWISH SOCIAL SERVICE BUREAU		UNITED CHARITIES	
	No.	Percent-age	No.	Percent-age	No.	Percent-age
Total . . . . .	1,573	100	636	100	937	100
0-4 . . . . .	46	3	14	2	32	3
5-9 . . . . .	573	36	152	24	421	45
10-14 . . . . .	756	48	335	53	421	45
15-19 . . . . .	178	11	121	19	57	6
20-24 . . . . .	18	1	13	2	5	1
25-29 . . . . .	2	0	1	0	1	0

largely, or even completely, beyond the control of the case-worker. If that is the case, then, the treatment of the case-worker is of little or no consequence.

One possible comparison would be in terms of the years of contact. The number of adjustments in each group of cases is too small, obviously, for any such analysis to be made between organizations. But all cases may be combined to give the results shown in Table XII.

From Table XII it appears that there are more adjustments where contact has been for less than a year than one would expect upon the basis of the distribution of all cases. The difference between the percentage for the total group

<sup>1</sup> 2.58 standard errors for each group of points are: 0-4, 2.3 per cent, 5-9, 6.5 per cent; 10-14, 6.7 per cent; 15-19, 4.2 per cent; 20-24, 1.6 per cent.

and that for adjustments is 11 per cent. The standard error multiplied by 2.58, however, is 13.2 per cent. Yet, this result could be expected to occur as a fluctuation in the sample only about once in twenty pairs of samples. If one takes the two groups, no record of discord and adjustment together, the percentage is 33, giving a difference in comparison to the total of 9 per cent, which slightly exceeds 2.58 standard

TABLE XII

YEARS CONTACT	TOTAL		OUTCOME			
			Adjustment		No Record of Discord and Adjustment	
	No.	Percent- age	No.	Percent- age	No.	Percent- age
Total.....	1,573	100	66	100	150	100
Less than 1.....	380	24	23	35	49	33
1.....	268	17	14	21	29	19
2.....	210	13	8	12	14	9
3.....	118	8	8	12	17	11
4.....	115	7	4	6	8	5
5-9.....	268	17	5	8	18	12
10-14.....	180	10	4	6	13	9
15-19.....	37	2	.....	.....	2	1
20 and over.....	6	0	.....	.....	.....	.....

errors. Or if one takes the combined group of less than two years, into which 41 per cent of all cases fall, one finds that it contains 56 per cent of the adjustments, a difference of 15 per cent, equaling approximately 2.58 standard errors. This seems to indicate, accordingly, an inverse relationship between the length of contact and the probability of adjustment. Yet in 12 per cent—Jewish Social Service Bureau, 11 per cent; United Charities, 12 per cent—of all cases there had been contact with the family for more than two

years before the problem of domestic discord was recognized.<sup>1</sup>

One of the factors which varies for any group is that of age. It might be expected that the proportion of adjustments varied for different age groups. Table XIII shows a trend toward the younger ages of husbands.

There are not, however, any appreciable differences for the age groups as given in this table. However, if all ages below forty years are combined, one finds that 47 per cent of all husbands fall in this group. The proportion of adjustments for this group is 63 per cent, giving a difference of 16 per cent, slightly in excess of 2.58 standard errors.<sup>2</sup> The situation for the wife is substantially the same (Table XIV).

<sup>1</sup> Another table which may be interpreted as showing lack of relation-ship between outcome and the efforts of case-workers follows:

YEARS OF MARRIED LIFE TO CLOSE OF RECORD	TOTAL		ADJUSTMENT	
	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage
Total.....	1,573	100	66	100
0-4.....	302	19	16	24
5-9.....	366	23	14	21
10-14.....	340	22	15	23
15-19.....	232	15	10	15
20-24.....	124	8	3	5
25 and over.....	72	5	0	.....
No record.....	137	9	8	12

It is generally considered to be easier to bring about an adjustment during the earlier years of married life, rather than later, so contact with case-workers might be expected to result in a larger proportion of adjustments, accordingly. This table, however, seems to indicate that the number of years of married life is of little significance in the outcome. The largest difference in the proportion of adjustments as compared to all cases for each group is that for 25 years and over. Here there are no adjustments as against an expected 5 per cent. The standard error, however, is comparatively high and the result would probably occur once in twenty pairs of samples. ( $2.28\sigma = 6.7$  per cent.)

<sup>2</sup> 2.58 standard errors are 15.4 per cent.

## DOMESTIC DISCORD

The grouping for which a significant difference can be obtained, however, is slightly lower, being that below 35 years. Forty-four per cent of all cases fall in this group as

TABLE XIII

AGE OF HUSBAND	TOTAL		ADJUSTMENT	
	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage
Total.....	1,573	100	66	100
20-24.....	56	4	5	8
25-29.....	160	10	10	15
30-34.....	246	16	11	17
35-39.....	269	17	16	23
40-44.....	232	15	6	9
45-49.....	141	9	4	6
50-54.....	113	7	3	5
55-59.....	43	3	2	3
60 and over.....	24	2	.....	.....
No record.....	279	18	9	14

TABLE XIV

AGE OF WIFE	TOTAL		ADJUSTMENT	
	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage
Total.....	1,573	100	66	100
15-19.....	17	1	1	2
20-24.....	143	9	10	15
25-29.....	227	15	10	15
30-34.....	307	20	18	27
35-39.....	287	18	10	15
40-44.....	204	13	5	8
45-49.....	90	6	1	2
50-54.....	48	3	1	2
55-59.....	17	1	.....	.....
60 and over.....	5	0	.....	.....
No record.....	228	15	10	15

compared with 59 per cent of adjustments. This difference of 15 per cent is approximately that of 2.58 standard errors.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 2.58 standard errors are 15.3 per cent.

## CHILDREN AND OUTCOME

The Freudians have made much of the sex of children as factors in the relations between husband and wife. This suggests the possibility that sex may be a factor in the adjustment process. Taking account of only the adjustments, however, fails to give significant results. But by adding together the two groups, no record of discord and adjustment, the results in Table XV are obtained.

TABLE XV

SEX OF CHILDREN IN FAMILY	TOTAL		ADJUSTMENT		NO RECORD OF DISCORD AND ADJUSTMENT	
	No.	Percent- age	No.	Percent- age	No.	Percent- age
Total.....	1,573	100	66	100	50	100
Neither.....	77	5	2	3	3	2
Boys only.....	293	19	10	15	21	14
Girls only.....	222	14	12	18	21	14
Both.....	981	62	42	64	105	70

Significant results are shown for one group of cases, that in which children are of both sexes. For the total there were children of both sexes in 62 per cent of the cases in contrast to 70 per cent of those cases ending in adjustment and no record of discord. The difference is 8 per cent, and while slightly less than 2.58 standard errors, would occur by chance only about once in 25 pairs of samples.<sup>1</sup> It must, therefore, be taken with some reservation.

This result, however, need not be taken to mean that the sex factor is of particular importance. It may mean only that families in which there are children of both sexes tend to be larger than those in which there are children of but one

<sup>1</sup> 2.58 standard errors are 9.6 per cent.

sex. This suggests the need for a classification in terms of the number of children.

If a large family be considered one in which there are more than four children and the remainder be considered small families, then the results in Table XVI are obtained.

This shows 12 per cent more adjustments for small families than would be anticipated upon the basis of distribution of all cases. This difference of 12 per cent is almost as great as 2.58 standard errors and would not occur by

TABLE XVI

NUMBER OF CHILDREN	TOTAL		ADJUSTMENT	
	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage
Total.....	1,573	100	66	100
0-4.....	1,217	77	59	89
5 and over.....	356	23	7	11

chance more than once in about 50 pairs of samples. It can, accordingly, be considered fairly significant.<sup>1</sup> This result, however, does not substantiate, necessarily, the interpretation offered for the results in Table XV. The number of cases, unfortunately, is too small for further analysis in this direction.

#### PROBLEMS AND OUTCOME

One of the factors determining the probability of adjustment is that of the problem in each case. Table XVII shows the distribution for each of the three major problems and combinations of them. The combinations are taken as a single group, due to the small number of cases showing each combination.

<sup>1</sup> 2.58 standard errors are 13 per cent.



The greatest difference in the two groups is that for the problem of domestic difficulty or infelicity. Fifty-three per cent of all adjustments were of this problem as compared with 23 per cent of all cases, a difference of 30 per cent, which is some two times 2.58 standard errors. Comparison of the adjustment group with all cases does not give significant results for desertion, the difference being 9 per cent, which

TABLE XVII

PROBLEMS	TOTAL		ADJUSTMENT	
	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage
Total.....	1,573	100	66	100
Domestic difficulty or infelicity.....	360	23	35	53
Desertion.....	474	30	14	21
Non-support.....	127	8	5	8
Combinations.....	612	39	12	18

might be expected to occur by chance once in 10 pairs of samples. Problems of non-support show adjustments proportional to the number in the total group. The group of combinations of problems, however, shows fewer adjustments than the proportion found in the total, the difference being 21 per cent, and somewhat exceeding 2.58 standard errors.<sup>1</sup>

#### YEARS OF DOMESTIC DISCORD AND OUTCOME

The interval elapsing between the recognition of a problem of domestic discord and the close of the record, i.e., years of domestic discord, constitutes a factor in the proportion of adjustments as shown by Table XVIII.

<sup>1</sup> 2.58 standard errors are: domestic difficulty, 13 per cent; desertion, 14.2 per cent; non-support, 8.2 per cent; combinations, 15 per cent.

Forty-one per cent of the adjustments occur in that group of cases in which a problem of domestic discord has been recognized for less than one year. The difference between this proportion and that for the total is 13 per cent, which is slightly less than 2.58 standard errors but may be

TABLE XVIII

YEARS OF DOMESTIC DISCORD	TOTAL		ADJUSTMENT		NO RECORD OF DISCORD AND ADJUSTMENT	
	No.	Percent-age	No.	Percent-age	No.	Percent-age
Total . . . . .	1,573	100	66	100	150	100
Less than 1 . . . . .	433	28	27	41	56	37
1 . . . . .	325	21	15	23	35	23
2 . . . . .	210	13	6	9	12	8
3 . . . . .	127	8	8	12	14	9
4 . . . . .	94	6	4	6	7	5
5-9 . . . . .	238	15	3	5	14	9
10-14 . . . . .	119	8	3	5	10	7
15-19 . . . . .	23	1	.....	.....	2	1
20 and over . . . . .	4	0	.....	.....	.....	.....

considered significant. If cases ending in no record of discord are also included, the difference is 9 per cent or approximately 2.58 standard errors. No other significant differences are found until one reaches the group, 5-9 years, in which less than 5 per cent of the adjustments occur though this group constitutes 15 per cent of all cases. The difference, slightly more than 9 per cent, would be expected to occur about once in 50 pairs of samples and cannot, therefore, be considered highly significant.<sup>1</sup>

This table indicates, then, that adjustments are more

<sup>1</sup> Standard errors multiplied by 2.58 follow: less than 1 year, adjustment, 13.8 per cent; adjustment and no record of discord, 8.9 per cent; 5-9 years, adjustments, 10.9 per cent.

frequent in those cases where the number of years of discord is less than one year. The probability of adjustment seems to decline after that for all cases, but shows little significant difference for year intervals. The decline, however, is probably gradual and cannot be taken to indicate that attempts

TABLE XIX

DIAGNOSTIC FACTORS	TOTAL		ADJUSTMENT	
	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage
Abuse.....	642	41	25	38
Drink.....	485	31	10	15
Immorality.....	467	30	22	34
Irregular habits.....	294	19	17	26
Laziness.....	286	18	12	18
Affinity.....	283	18	14	21
Mental deficiency.....	281	18	12	18
Bad housekeeping.....	261	17	11	17
Nagging.....	202	13	15	23
Family interference.....	197	13	15	23
Uncontrolled temper.....	196	12	10	15
Jealousy.....	134	9	9	14
Extravagance.....	123	8	5	8
Physical deficiency.....	111	7	6	9
Stinginess.....	96	6	8	12
Venereal disease.....	79	5	3	5
Sex refusal.....	78	5	10	15
Excessive sex demands.....	78	5	3	5
Slovenliness.....	73	5	4	6
Children by former marriage.....	65	4	1	2
Evil companions.....	54	3	4	6
Restlessness.....	36	2	.....	.....
Age differences.....	31	2	1	2
Inadequate income.....	37	2	5	8
Sex perversion.....	24	2	.....	.....
Black sheep.....	22	1	.....	.....
Religious differences.....	18	1	.....	.....
National differences.....	7	0.4	.....	.....

toward adjustment are futile after the elapse of any particular period.

There is also a connection between the diagnostic factors in a case and the probability of adjustment as shown by

Table XIX. The only diagnostic factors showing significant differences in proportion between all cases and adjustments are: drink, nagging, family interference, sex refusal, and inadequate income. All, except drink, appear more frequently in the adjustment group than in the total. This may indicate that the case-worker is better equipped to handle these four factors than others. Yet one, nagging, appears more frequently in the group ending in discord as well as that ending in adjustment.<sup>1</sup>

#### STATUS AT RECOGNITION OF DOMESTIC DISCORD

The proportion of adjustments varies also with the status of the relations between husband and wife at the time discord was recognized as a problem for treatment. This is shown in Table XX.

TABLE XX

STATUS AT RECOGNITION OF DOMESTIC DISCORD	TOTAL		ADJUSTMENT	
	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage
Total.....	1,573	100	66	100
Husband and wife living together...	569	36	34	52
Husband away.....	495	31	12	18
Wife away.....	92	6	9	14
Husband deserted.....	408	26	11	17
Wife deserted.....	9	1	.....	.....

Husband and wife were living together in only 36 per cent of all cases, but this status group constituted 52 per cent of the adjustments, a difference of 16 per cent which slightly exceeds 2.58 standard errors and is therefore significant. The difference of 13 per cent where the husband was

<sup>1</sup> 2.58 standard errors are: drink, 14.3 per cent; nagging, 10.2 per cent; family interference, 10.2 per cent; sex refusal, 6.5 per cent; inadequate income, 4.6 per cent.

away would not occur oftener than once in 50 pairs of samples and may be interpreted as fairly significant and therefore to indicate a trend in the direction of lower probability of adjustment. Some difference is shown for desertion cases, but this amount would be likely to occur about once in 15 pairs of samples. If these cases in which husband and wife were living together are compared with all other cases, of course, the probability of adjustment is higher for the former group. Adjustments in those cases where the wife was away shows a significant proportion, the difference observed of 8 per cent exceeding 2.58 standard errors.<sup>1</sup>

#### CONCLUSIONS

It has been shown, then, that the proportion of adjustments varies with certain characteristics of the group such as the age of husband at the time of marriage, status at time of recognition of domestic discord, age, size of family, etc., many of which are beyond the control of the case-worker. These variances must be taken into account, therefore, in crediting a particular agency with a greater degree of success in comparison to another. So long as these differences cannot be allowed for in every case any comparison between the treatment of one agency with that of another in terms of the degree of successful results seems dubious. The alternative seems to lie in the direction of analysis of specific techniques rather than all grouped together.

<sup>1</sup> 2.58 standard errors by groups: husband and wife together, 14.8 per cent; husband away, 14.3 per cent; husband deserted, 13.5 per cent; wife away, 7.2 per cent.

## CHAPTER IX

### TREATMENT TECHNIQUES IN CASE-WORK

One of the first problems which confronts one in the analysis of case-work methods of treating domestic discord, or any other case-work problem, is that of the relation between diagnosis and treatment. If diagnosis is anything more than a romantic adventure then it must be useful and serve as an indication of what treatment is to follow.

An attempt was made to relate the whole complex of treatment to that of diagnosis upon the theory that certain combinations of treatment techniques would go along with certain combinations of diagnostic factors. It was found, however, that the combinations of diagnostic factors numbered 384 in 1,573 cases, while 64 combinations of treatment techniques were discovered. This analysis, accordingly, had to be abandoned for something more simple. It is possible, however, to relate certain treatment techniques separately to the various diagnostic factors. This part of the analysis will be limited to the two techniques which occur most frequently in the treatment of the total cases, in relation with each of the diagnostic factors. These two techniques are: Court of Domestic Relations and ordering-and-forbidding.<sup>1</sup>

#### DIAGNOSTIC FACTORS AND COURT OF DOMESTIC RELATIONS CONTACT

Table XXI shows the percentage of cases in which each factor was recorded for both the total group and for those

<sup>1</sup> The use of the conference technique is more frequent than that of the ordering-and-forbidding for the total, but since it is used relatively not at all by one organization it was thought better to select the former.

cases where there was contact with the Court of Domestic Relations. The factors showing a significant difference in frequency in the Court of Domestic Relations group as compared with all cases are: physical deficiency, drink,

TABLE XXI

Diagnostic Factors	Percentage of Total	Percentage Court of Domestic Relations Contact
Abuse.....	41	45
Drink.....	31	37
Immorality.....	29.7	32.4
Irregular habits.....	18.7	20.8
Laziness.....	18.2	21.4
Affinity.....	18	18
Mental deficiency.....	17.9	19.6
Bad housekeeping.....	16.7	18.6
Nagging.....	13	13
Family interference.....	12.5	14.6
Uncontrolled temper.....	12.5	13
Jealousy.....	9	8.4
Extravagance.....	7.8	5.4
Physical deficiency.....	7	4.8
Stinginess.....	6	6
Venereal disease.....	5	5
Sex refusal.....	5	5
Excessive sex demands.....	5	5
Slovenliness.....	5	5
Children by previous marriage.....	4	4
Discipline of children.....	3.7	4.7
Evil companions.....	3	3
Age differences.....	2	2
Sex perversion.....	2	2
Restlessness.....	2	2
Inadequate income.....	1.7	1.4
Black sheep.....	1.4	1.7
Religious differences.....	1	1
National differences.....	0.4	0.4

laziness, abuse, irregular habits, family interference, bad housekeeping, immorality, and extravagance. All of these occurred relatively oftener in the Court of Domestic Relations group than in the total except physical deficiency and

extravagance which occurred less frequently. The differences in each instance either equal or exceed 2.58 standard errors, the amount of excess ranging from 0 for irregular habits and bad housekeeping to more than two times 2.58 standard errors for drink. Two other factors also approach significant results, viz., mental deficiency and discipline of children. But the difference for mental deficiency, showing a

TABLE XXII

AGE OF HUSBAND	TOTAL		NO RECORD OF COURT OF DOMESTIC RELATIONS		COURT OF DOMESTIC RELATIONS	
	No.	Percent-age	No.	Percent-age	No.	Percent-age
Total.....	1,573	100	631	100	942	100
20-24 .....	56	4	20	3	36	4
25-29 .....	170	11	63	10	107	11
30-34 .....	246	16	96	15	150	16
35-39 .....	269	17	85	13	184	20
40-44 .....	213	15	91	14	140	15
45-49 .....	141	9	58	9	83	9
50-54 .....	113	7	50	8	63	7
55-59 .....	43	3	20	3	23	2
60 and over .....	25	2	16	3	9	1
No record .....	279	18	132	21	147	16

higher proportion for Court of Domestic Relations contact cases, would probably occur by chance once in 15 pairs of samples. The other, discipline of children, also more frequent for Court of Domestic Relations contacts, would probably occur by chance once in fifty pairs of samples.<sup>1</sup>

One cannot conclude, however, that because certain fac-

<sup>1</sup> 2.58 standard errors follow: physical deficiency, 1.4 per cent; drink, 2.5 per cent; laziness, 2.1 per cent; abuse, 2.6 per cent; irregular habits, 2.1 per cent; family interference, 2.1 per cent; immorality, 2.7 per cent; extravagance, 1.5 per cent; mental deficiency, 2.2 per cent; discipline of children, 1.1 per cent.



tors are associated with contact with the Court of Domestic Relations, workers must look upon this technique as particularly applicable for cases in which these factors occur. Table XXII, for example, shows a relationship between the age of the husband and contact with the Court of Domestic Relations.

TABLE XXIII

No. OF CHILDREN	TOTAL		NO RECORD OF COURT OF DOMESTIC RELATIONS		COURT OF DOMESTIC RELATIONS	
	No.	Percent-age	No.	Percent-age	No.	Percent-age
Total.....	1,573	100	631	100	942	100
0.....	77	5	47	7	30	3
1.....	227	14	100	16	127	13
2.....	340	22	146	23	194	21
3.....	330	21	133	21	197	21
4.....	243	15	91	14	152	16
5.....	174	11	61	10	113	12
6.....	95	6	35	6	60	6
7.....	49	3	16	3	33	4
8.....	19	1	3	0	16	2
9.....	14	1	4	1	10	1
10 and over.....	5	0	.....	.....	5	1

Comparing the two groups, those in which there is no record of Court of Domestic Relations contact and those which have been in court, a significant difference is found for only one group, that of 35-39 years, the remainder of the age groups showing about the same percentages in each subgroup.<sup>1</sup> Where there is no record of age a larger proportion of cases have had no contact with the court in contrast to the greater proportion for the age group, 35-39 years.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 2.58 standard errors equal 5 per cent.

<sup>2</sup> The standard of variation is approximately the same as that for the age group, 35-39 years, i.e., 5 per cent.

The influence of another factor may be seen also in Table XXIII in which these two subgroups are compared with reference to the number of children in each family.

Only one significant difference appears, and that where there are no children. These cases make up 4 per cent more of the group where there is no record of court contact as compared with those which have been in court.<sup>1</sup> By combining the groupings with regard to children, however, other significant differences appear. There is, for example, a larger proportion of cases in which there are 0-2 children who have no contact with the court than have such contact. On the other hand, combining the last four groups in the table, i.e., 7-10 and over, one finds that this group shows a significant proportion in favor of the court technique.<sup>2</sup> This would seem to indicate, then, that court contact is less likely in cases where there are few children than in cases of large families.<sup>3</sup>

#### DIAGNOSTIC FACTORS AND ORDERING-AND-FORBIDDING

The distribution of cases by diagnostic factors where the technique used is that of ordering-and-forbidding is probably more significant than that for Court of Domestic Relations contacts, because, as has been pointed out, the case-worker is not always instrumental in sending the case to the court, while the ordering-and-forbidding treatment is her own. Table XXIV shows the percentages of all cases in

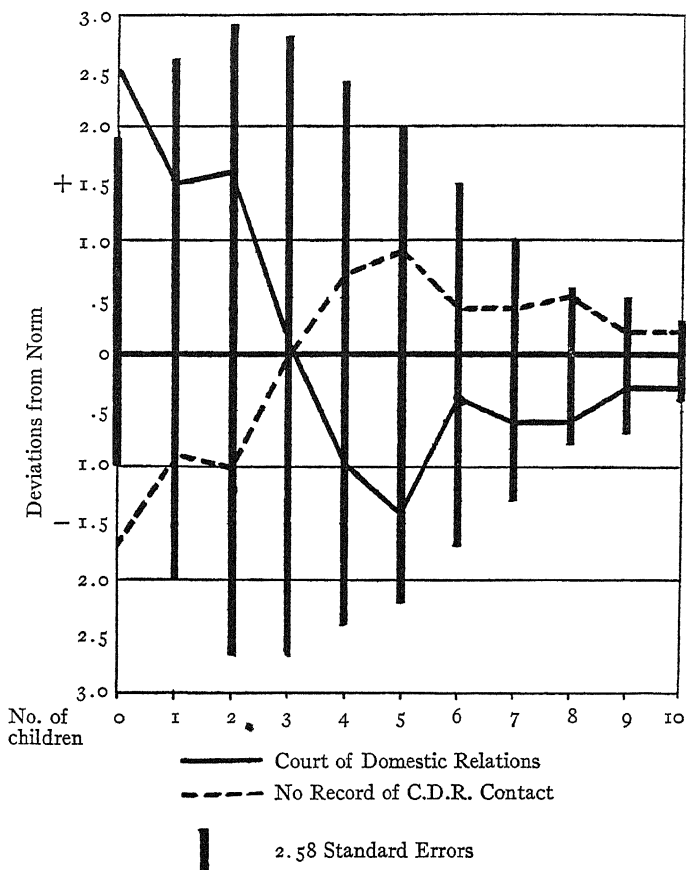
<sup>1</sup> 2.58 standard errors are 3 per cent.

<sup>2</sup> 2.58 standard errors are: 0-2 children, 6.6 per cent; 7-10 and over children, 2.9 per cent.

<sup>3</sup> Chart I shows this trend more clearly. The chart shows the differences in percentages of cases by number of children in family in excess or deficiency of the total group for each of the sub-groups, i.e., (1) for cases in which there was contact with the Court of Domestic Relations and (2) cases in which there was no such contact, as compared with 2.58 standard errors.

which each factor occurred in comparison to the percentages where the ordering-and-forbidding technique was the method of treatment.

CHART I



Significant differences are revealed for the following factors: mental deficiency, laziness, abuse, irregular habits,

nagging, bad housekeeping, immorality, jealousy, evil companions, uncontrolled temper, excessive sex demands, extravagance, stinginess, and sex refusal. Each of these factors

TABLE XXIV

Diagnostic Factors	Percentage of Total	Percentage of Ordering-and-Forbidding
Abuse.....	41	62
Drink.....	31	25
Immorality.....	30	39
Irregular habits.....	19	32
Laziness.....	18	29
Affinity.....	18	14
Mental deficiency.....	18	28
Bad housekeeping.....	17	33
Nagging.....	13	33
Family interference.....	12.5	18
Uncontrolled temper.....	12.5	28
Jealousy.....	9	21
Extravagance.....	8	16
Physical deficiency.....	7	10
Stinginess.....	6	16
Venereal disease.....	5	6
Sex refusal.....	5	15
Excessive sex demands.....	5	11
Slovenliness.....	5	6
Children by previous marriage.....	4	2
Discipline of children.....	4	8
Evil companions.....	3	9
Age differences.....	2	2
Inadequate income.....	2	2
Sex perversion.....	2	0
Restlessness.....	2	1
Religious differences.....	1	0
Black sheep.....	1	1
National differences.....	0.4	0

occurs relatively more frequently for cases in which the treatment method was ordering-and-forbidding than in all cases as a whole. This would seem to indicate, then, that this method of treatment is considered the proper one to be used

in all cases in which these factors occur, unless there are other factors of more importance.<sup>1</sup>

## PROBLEMS AND TREATMENT

Since case-work is, presumably, in terms of problems rather than in terms of diagnostic factors, certain techniques of treatment would be expected to be used more frequently in connection with certain problems than with others. Table XXV shows the distribution in percentages for the most frequent combinations of treatment.

TABLE XXV

PROBLEMS	TOTAL	TREATMENT TECHNIQUES IN PERCENTAGES					
		N.R.	C.D.R.	Ord. For.	C.D.R. Ps. Ex.	C.D.R. Conf.	Conf.
Total.....	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Domestic difficulty....	23	21	15	59	28	21	46
Desertion. ....	30	34	31	9	20	5	4
Non-support.....	8	21	11	0	10	2	4
Combinations.....	39	24	42	32	42	71	46

One of the problems for which there were more cases of no record of treatment than one might anticipate upon the basis of the total distribution is that of non-support. The difference in percentage of occurrence in the whole group as compared with the no record of treatment group is 13 per cent, almost 5 times 2.58 standard errors, and could not,

<sup>1</sup> 2.58 standard errors follow: mental deficiency, 9.1 per cent; laziness, 9.1 per cent; abuse, 11.6 per cent; irregular habits, 9.3 per cent; nagging, 7.9 per cent; bad housekeeping, 8.9 per cent; immorality, 11 per cent; jealousy, 6.7 per cent; evil companions, 4 per cent; uncontrolled temper, 7.7 per cent; excessive sex demands, 5.2 per cent; extravagance, 6.4 per cent; stinginess, 5.5 per cent; sex refusal, 5.2 per cent.

therefore, have occurred as a fluctuation in the sample. There is also a difference of 15 per cent in comparing the groups where the problems are combinations of the other three. This is several times 2.58 standard errors. In this instance, however, there are fewer cases showing no record of treatment than one might expect, even in spite of the inclusion in this group of all problems of separation as used by the Jewish Social Service Bureau.<sup>1</sup>

Where the treatment is the Court of Domestic Relations there are significant differences in the distribution in comparison to that of all cases for the problems of domestic difficulty and non-support. Domestic difficulty cases occur 8 per cent less frequently in the Court of Domestic Relations group than in the total and non-support cases 3 per cent more frequently. Both differences are significant, the first being almost three times 2.58 standard errors, and the second one and one-half times that measure.<sup>2</sup> This seems to indicate that while cases in which the problems are other than non-support go to the Court of Domestic Relations, that technique is nevertheless that considered particularly applicable in non-support cases, its use being the lowest in problems of domestic difficulty.

The ordering-and-forbidding technique, on the other hand, is most frequently used in problems of domestic difficulty. This technique is used about 36 per cent more frequently in domestic difficulty problems than one might expect in comparison with the total distribution. This difference is about one and one-half times 2.58 standard errors and would not occur by chance oftener than about once in

<sup>1</sup> 2.58 standard errors are: domestic difficulty, 4.1 per cent; desertion, 4.5 per cent; non-support, 2.7 per cent; combinations, 4.8. per cent.

<sup>2</sup> 2.58 standard errors are: domestic difficulty, 3 per cent; desertion, 3.3 per cent; non-support, 2 per cent; combinations, 3.5 per cent.

10,000 pairs of samples. Other differences are not significant.<sup>1</sup>

No significant differences are found where the treatment is a combination of Court of Domestic Relations contact and psychiatric examination, the differences being relatively small in comparison to 2.58 standard errors. There are significant differences, however, where the treatment is a combination of Court of Domestic Relations and conference. These differences occur for desertion problems and combinations, there being 25 per cent fewer desertion problems, and 32 per cent more combinations than in the total group. Both differences exceed 2.58 standard errors by from 40 to 70 per cent respectively.<sup>2</sup>

It is interesting to notice that the results where the techniques used were a combination of Court of Domestic Relations and conference are substantially the same for desertion as where the conference technique alone was used. The problem of domestic difficulty, however, occurs more frequently in cases where the conference technique is used than for the whole group, the difference being 23 per cent. This indicates, then, that the conference technique is generally not used in desertion problems, either alone or in combination with the Court of Domestic Relations. In combinations of problems, however, the conference technique is more frequently used in connection with the Court of Domestic Relations than for the whole group of cases.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 2.58 standard errors follow: domestic difficulty, 23 per cent; desertion, 25 per cent; non-support, 15 per cent; combinations, 26 per cent.

<sup>2</sup> 2.58 standard errors follow: domestic difficulty, 16 per cent; desertion, 18 per cent; non-support, 11 per cent; combinations, 19 per cent.

<sup>3</sup> Comparing conference group with total, 2.58 standard errors follow: domestic difficulty, 21 per cent; desertion, 22 per cent; non-support, 13 per cent; combinations, 24 per cent.

## RELATION OF TREATMENT TO OUTCOME

The next problem for consideration is that of the relation between the method of treatment and the status of the domestic situation at the close of the case, i.e., the outcome. Obviously, some sort of classification of treatment techniques is necessary to prevent the groups from becoming too small and therefore showing no significant results. Cases have been grouped, accordingly, into those in which the only treatment was through the Court of Domestic Relations, those in which the treatment did not include Court of Domestic Relations contact, but in which some other treatment technique was indicated in the record—"social service only"—and those cases in which there was a combination of these two groups. Table XXVI follows:

TABLE XXVI

Treatment Technique	Total	Adjustment	No Record of Discord and Adjustment
Total.....	100	100	100
No record .....	30	36	36
C.D.R. only.....	46	35	36
Social service only.....	11	14	15
C.D.R. and social service.....	14	15	13

Comparing the distribution of cases ending in adjustment with all cases does not give significant results, the differences for each item in the stub being less than 2.58 standard errors in each instance. The largest differences are those for no record of treatment and Court of Domestic Relations contact only, these being 6 and 11 per cent respectively. The first difference might be expected to occur in about every



third pair of samples; the second about once in every 15 pairs of samples.<sup>1</sup>

Combining the two groups, adjustment and no record of discord, gives significant results. The largest differences are for the groups, no record, Court of Domestic Relations, and social service. The difference for the group where there is no record of treatment is 6 per cent, which is slightly less than 2.58 standard errors and would occur as a fluctuation in the sample about once in fifteen trials. It cannot be regarded, therefore, as highly significant, though it may indicate a trend. The difference for the group of Court of Domestic Relations contact is 10 per cent, which slightly exceeds 2.58 standard errors. There are, in other words, fewer cases of "adjustment," or showing successful treatment, where there has been contact with the Court of Domestic Relations than could occur by chance. The difference for the social service group is 4 per cent, which also would occur, presumably, about once in fifteen samples taken from the same universe and cannot be considered as highly significant. Combining the two groups, no record and social service, however, gives significant results, the difference being 10 per cent, which is slightly larger than 2.58 standard errors. The chances for successful outcome—i.e., ending in adjustment or no record of discord—are better, therefore, if the treatment does not take the family to the Court of Domestic Relations.<sup>2</sup>

#### OBJECT FOR TREATMENT

Treatment, of course, may be directed toward either the husband or the wife or both. The question of who is the ob-

<sup>1</sup> 2.58 standard errors: no record, 14.2 per cent; Court of Domestic Relations, 15.2 per cent.

<sup>2</sup> 2.58 standard errors: no record, 9 per cent; Court of Domestic Relations, 9.8 per cent; social service, 6.1 per cent; no record and social service, 9.7 per cent.

## DOMESTIC DISCORD

ject for treatment in cases of domestic discord is, therefore, an important one. One technique of treatment, obviously, is directed primarily toward the husband, i.e., contact with the Court of Domestic Relations. If these 942 cases are taken into consideration and considered as treatment of the husband, then there is no question but that he is the chief

TABLE XXVII

TREATMENT TECHNIQUE	TOTAL CASES	OBJECT FOR TREATMENT		
		Husband	Wife	Both
Total.....	376	154	153	69
Birth-control instruction..	25	2	18	5
Medical examination.....	33	12	19	2
Psychiatric examination..	94	32	52	10
Drink cure.....	5	5	.....	.....
Ordering-and-forbidding ..	109	55	22	32
Auto-suggestion.....	2	2	.....	.....
Persuasion.....	54	25	9	20
Housekeeping instruction ..	19	.....	19	.....
Extradition.....	21	21	.....	.....
Deportation.....	14	.....	14	.....

object of treatment in cases of domestic discord. Disregarding these cases and those in which the technique was the conference—both husband and wife being included in the latter—one obtains the results in Table XXVII.

From Table XXVII it appears that treatment is directed about equally toward husband and wife if one disregards those cases going to the Court of Domestic Relations. There are, however, differences in the two groups for certain of the treatment techniques. Distributing the cases where treatment is directed toward both husband and wife one gets the results in Table XXVIII.

Comparing the two groups, i.e., husband and wife, each

as the object for treatment, in terms of the techniques used, one finds significant differences for the following techniques: birth-control instruction, medical examination, drink cure, psychiatric examination, and ordering-and-forbidding. The difference where persuasion is the technique would occur by chance about once in 25 pairs of samples. The techniques, housekeeping instruction, deportation, and extradi-

TABLE XXVIII

TREATMENT TECHNIQUE	TOTAL PERCENTAGE	OBJECT FOR TREATMENT IN PERCENTAGE	
		Husband	Wife
Total. . . . .	100	100	100
Birth-control instruction. . . . .	7	3	10
Medical examination. . . . .	8	6	9
Psychiatric examination. . . . .	19	28	23
Drink cure. . . . .	1	2	0
Ordering-and-forbidding. . . . .	32	39	24
Auto-suggestion. . . . .	0	1	0
Persuasion. . . . .	17	20	13
Housekeeping instruction. . . . .	4	0	9
Extradition. . . . .	5	9	0
Deportation. . . . .	3	0	3

tion, obviously, are related to but one person as the object for treatment. Where treatment may be directed toward either husband or wife, then, it seems that the techniques more often directed toward the wife are birth-control instruction, medical examination, and psychiatric examination. The techniques favored in treating the husband are, on the other hand, drink cure, ordering-and-forbidding, and possibly persuasion.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 2.58 standard errors are: birth-control instruction, 5.9 per cent; medical examination, 6.3 per cent; psychiatric examination, 9.7 per cent; drink cure, 2.2 per cent; ordering-and-forbidding, 10.8 per cent; persuasion, 8.6 per cent.

## INTERVIEW WITH HUSBAND AND OUTCOME

Because of the smallness of the sample it is not feasible to analyze each of the treatment techniques as it is directed toward the husband and wife in relation to the outcome. But one can differentiate between those cases where the husband was interviewed and those in which he was not and determine if this shows any relationship with the outcome. Obviously, cases where the whereabouts of the husband were unknown need to be excluded. The results are given in Table XXIX.

TABLE XXIX

Husband Interviewed?	Total Percentage	Adjustment	No Record of Discord and Adjustment
Total.....	100	100	100
Yes.....	72	82	78
No.....	28	18	22

Comparing the adjustment group with the total the difference is 10 per cent, which is somewhat less than 2.58 standard errors and would occur by chance about once in 8 pairs of samples. Comparison of the combined group of adjustment and no record of discord fails also to give significant results, the difference being equal to about seven-tenths of 2.58 standard errors and therefore would probably occur as a fluctuation in the sample about once in 15 pairs of samples.<sup>1</sup>

## INADEQUACY OF CASE RECORDS

Up to this point there has been no attempt to determine what is meant by an "adjustment." In fact, on occasion, cases ending in "no record of discord" have been added to

<sup>1</sup> 2.58 standard errors: adjustment group, 16.5 per cent; adjustment and no record of discord, 8.7 per cent.

the group ending in "adjustment" upon the assumption that the two groups tend to represent successful treatment. It is necessary, therefore, to examine these terms more carefully in order to come to some conclusion with regard to the adequacy of present treatment techniques in case-work for handling domestic discord problems.

It has already been pointed out in a brief way that in studies of this sort such measurements have been very largely subjective, i.e., in terms of certain criteria in the investigator's mind but nowhere set down in such a way that another person reading the same records would arrive at the same judgment. In the United Charities' study already referred to, a number of persons read the records and recorded judgments with regard to whether or not treatment had been successful and to why there had been failure. Causes for failure were thought to lie in two directions, limitations in the organization itself and limitations in community resources, and were recorded accordingly.

In general the following plan was used in making a judgment as to the cause of failure: If the record showed attempts to get at the *true cause* [italics added] of the situation and to take measures to remove it, failures and omissions were attributed to lack of time. If, on the other hand, action was taken by the case worker, with little apparent effort to learn the true cause of the difficulties, if there *seemed* to be failure to recognize signals of discord in the family life—if there seemed to be no consideration of the differences in the background of different nationality groups dealt with, or if the existing community resources needed were not used, then the failure was attributed to lack of equipment.<sup>1</sup>

Failures due to lack of time or lack of equipment, of course, were all considered to show limitations within the

<sup>1</sup> Nesbitt, "Causes of Some Failures in the Work of the United Charities of Chicago," *Social Forces*, V (December, 1926), 260.

organization itself. Why a second group of causes should be added, i.e., limitations in community resources, is not clear since these might well be included in the first group.<sup>1</sup> It is obvious, however, that the paragraph quoted makes certain implications which need to be examined. It assumes that there are certain standardized data which are necessary in the handling of any case and once obtained the method of treatment is clear and decisive. The most original work on the part of a case-worker, accordingly, might be regarded as showing lack of equipment on the part of the worker.

Nowhere was there any attempt to determine whether or not the standardized techniques were adequate. Neither was there any attempt to reformulate the problems of case-work in more fundamental terms. Yet the whole category of limitations in community resources might have been eliminated had this been done. The analysis is thus quite in keeping with one point of view in social work which looks to the organization of new agencies for the performance of any new function. From the alternative point of view, these functions would be added to those of the agencies already in existence.

But what can be done with case-work records in the direction of measuring the effectiveness of treatment? Do case-records contain the necessary information for determining the results of treatment? This is the crucial problem in the study referred to as well as in all other studies of this sort. The answer cannot, unfortunately, be given briefly, much less can the question be pushed aside or ignored.

#### NO RECORD OF DISCORD

Cases ending in no record of discord have already been defined as those in which there was nothing in the record to

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*

indicate conflict between husband and wife at the last contacts, though there had been formerly, neither did these records contain positive information that the conflict had been eliminated. Obviously, in many of these cases there must have been some change in the attitudes of the clients or the conflict would have been of such a nature as to have attracted the attention of the case-worker. Many of the cases, accordingly, present either other crises which overshadowed the domestic conflict, such as unemployment, sickness, etc., or else they indicate the discovery of other problems on the part of the worker and so her attention is directed away from the domestic conflict which she has become tired of working with.

Adjustments have been defined as those cases in which there was some positive statement recorded by the case-worker, either in the language of the client or as her own conviction—if she gave what might reasonably be considered confirmative evidence—indicating that there was no longer any conflict between husband and wife. These statements may have come at the end of the record or earlier. If earlier, of course, there must have been nothing in later contacts to indicate that they no longer represented the situation at that later time. It is obvious, however, that whether a case were placed in the “no record of discord” group or in the adjustment group would, in some instances, be a matter of judgment. A case, for example, in which the wife was reported to have said: “We are getting along all right now; we don’t need your help any more,” may have indicated nothing more than that financial assistance was no longer needed from the organization and that so far as the domestic discord was concerned the wife was more or less reconciled to let things stand at the present since the worker had done nothing about it anyway. It was necessary, accordingly, in

cases where the data at the close was in such ambiguous terms as illustrated to characterize the situation as showing no record of discord.

It is possible, however, by statistical manipulation to determine to what extent the "no record of discord" group represents the same sort of situations as one has in the adjustment group. Classifying the cases in both groups in terms of certain attributes or variables common to both, it

TABLE XXX

YEARS OF MARRIED LIFE	TOTAL		NO RECORD OF DISCORD		ADJUSTMENT	
	No.	Percent- age	No.	Percent- age	No.	Percent- age
Total.....	150	100	84	100	66	100
0-32.....	140	93	82	98	58	88
No record.....	10	7	2	2	8	12

would be expected that the distributions would show no significant differences in percentages if both groups represent the same closing situations, i.e., if both represent the same degree of adjustment. If significant differences are found it would not indicate conclusively that all cases in the "no record of discord" group did not represent the same degree of adjustment as do those cases in the adjustment group, but that there are sufficient unlike situations in the former to serve as a basis for differentiation. The number of cases in each group is so small, obviously, that many variations in the two distributions have to be disregarded without any assurance either that they would disappear or increase in further samples.

The first of these comparisons is in terms of whether or



not there is any record of the years of married life, which is equivalent to whether or not the date of marriage was recorded (Table XXX).

This comparison shows a difference between the two groups of 10 per cent, which is approximately equal to 2.58 standard errors.<sup>1</sup> There is a difference between these two groups, accordingly, with respect to whether or not the date of marriage is given, this date being more frequently recorded in cases ending in adjustment as contrasted with those ending in no record of discord.

The next comparison showing a significant difference is that in terms of the size of the family (Table XXXI).

TABLE XXXI

Number of Children	Total	No Record of Discord	Adjustment
Total.....	100	100	100
0-5.....	85	79	94
6 and over.....	15	21	6

These distributions show a difference of 15 per cent, which is approximately equal to 2.58 standard errors.<sup>2</sup> It can be said, then, that small families are characteristic of cases ending in adjustment as compared to those ending in no record of discord. This suggests the possibility that the domestic discord problem became lost in the maze of other problems where families were large.

Significant results are also obtained when the cases in the two groups are classified in terms of problems (Table XXXII).

<sup>1</sup> 2.58 standard errors are 10.5 per cent.

<sup>2</sup> 2.58 standard errors, 15 per cent.

Significant differences appear in two instances: domestic infelicity or difficulty, 29 per cent; and combinations (including the problem of separation, Jewish Social Service Bureau), 18 per cent. The first is somewhat in excess of 2.58 standard errors and the second slightly less.<sup>1</sup>

TABLE XXXII

Problems	Total	No Record of Discord	Adjustment
Total .....	100	100	100
Domestic infelicity .....	37	24	53
Desertion .....	28	33	21
Non-support .....	7	7	8
Combinations .....	28	36	18

Classifying the cases in the two groups in terms of the years of domestic discord does not give as conclusive results as those had in the other tables (Table XXXIII).

TABLE XXXIII

Years Domestic Discord	Total	No Record of Discord	Adjustment
Total .....	100	100	100
0-4 .....	83	76	90
5 and over .....	17	24	10

The difference of 14 per cent between the two groups, while it is slightly less than 2.58 standard errors, would not occur by chance, probably, oftener than once in 50 pairs of samples and may be taken to indicate a fairly significant result.<sup>2</sup> This result suggests the possibility that the fact

<sup>1</sup> 2.58 standard errors are: domestic infelicity, 20 per cent; combinations, 19 per cent.

<sup>2</sup> 2.58 standard errors are 16 per cent.

that there had been domestic discord for a long period accounts for this phase of the situation being disregarded in the disposition of the case.

These results in four comparisons seem to justify, accordingly, the differentiation between the two groups, no record of discord and adjustment; the former probably containing a few cases similar to those in the adjustment group, but predominantly of cases which cannot be considered to represent adjustments, but instead cases in which the attention of the worker, for one reason or another, has turned to other aspects of the family situation.

#### ANALYSIS OF ADJUSTMENT CASES

The question of what constitutes an adjustment must now be gone into in more detail. In this connection there are, of course, two problems: (1) What constitutes an adjustment? and (2) Can successful treatment be measured in terms of adjustment?

The statistics of adjustment analyzed in this and the preceding chapter have been in terms of adjustment as already defined. The first problem, then, is to determine the nature of the situations which have been taken to represent adjustments. The conclusion may, in fact, be stated in this fashion: few, if any, of these cases represent adjustments in what may be called a fundamental sense. What constitutes a fundamental adjustment will be discussed later.<sup>1</sup>

Characterization of the closing situation as showing adjustment has been acknowledged as containing in some instances certain elements of judgment. This should not be taken to indicate, however, that the writer thought that the evidence represented an adjustment in any fundamental

<sup>1</sup> See pages 235-36, and 248-49.

sense, but only that he thought that the data given conformed as nearly as could be expected to the criteria set up to represent an adjustment. He has, in fact, in all the cases read found less than half a dozen showing what he would consider an adjustment, and in those cases there was nothing in the record to indicate how the adjustment had been brought about.

Quotations and summaries from some of the case records will indicate the nature of what has been called adjustment.

In case 1025, the family moved to another neighborhood, after which the husband said that he had no further complaint to make as his wife was more congenial, a better housekeeper, and no longer quarreled with him. There was no more contact with the family after that report. The case had been known to the organization for twelve years, always as a domestic discord case. The wife had been diagnosed by a physician as a committable case.

Case 1089 is one in which there had been contact as a domestic discord problem for seven years. There had been several separations within that period. The husband returned home five weeks before the closing entry. At the latter time the wife said they were getting along very well. The oldest child had been injured, accidentally, just prior to the husband's return and the wife's family advised her to give her husband another chance.

A case of twelve years standing, 1092, closes with this entry: "This date [a few days after the case came up in the Court of Domestic Relations] Mr. ——— [son] telephoned that his father and mother were reconciled, that an adjustment in the home had been made and the case may be dropped in the Court of Domestic Relations and in ———"

[the agency]. No further service is necessary from either agency."

In the foregoing instances the adjustment would seem to be of a temporary nature at most. In the following it may be more lasting, though not necessarily. Case 1387 is one of short contact. The wife accused her husband of abuse, laziness, and neglecting her for his club. The husband in turn complained that his wife's relatives interfered, that she was a bad housekeeper and that she also spent too much time at her club. In the Court of Domestic Relations both agreed to give up their respective clubs. This was a month after first contact. A month later both reported disagreements. About a month following this the wife said that things were running more smoothly. Another month passed and the wife reported that her husband had told her that he had made a mistake and by doing so he had learned his lesson. The case was closed a week later with the following characterization of the situation: "An adjustment between Mr. and Mrs. R seems to be effected, since Mr. R is conscientiously working and is supporting the family."

Some cases, thus, seem to represent genuine adjustments for the time being, though one may doubt how long they will last. Others suggest an entirely different situation in which "reconciliation" is accomplished by repression as in the following:

Case 1083 is one of four years' contact during the interval of which the husband had left home for about six weeks. A visiting housekeeper was sent into the home for a time. The husband had not complained of bad housekeeping but of slovenliness of his wife. An excerpt from the closing entry follows:

The home was absolutely filthy. Mrs. C had no complaints to make against her husband [she had accused him of gambling, abuse and drink], saying that he still plays cards but only once to twice a week and she is perfectly willing to have him do this. He gives her his entire earnings. She is perfectly satisfied with his behavior.

In a short-contact case, 1047, the wife said that their domestic difficulty had been adjusted for the present, and she and her husband had been getting along well for the last six weeks. She was reluctant to discuss the situation further.

In other cases, the entries are such as to cause one to wonder if the contact of the case worker is such that the client would express his attitudes freely. The report of adjustment may be only a "blind" to keep the worker from making further calls, and not represent the situation at all. There are suggestions of this in the following cases.

In Case 1554, one of short contact, the wife said that for the last two months her husband's behavior had been perfect. Some friends, she said, had interceded in behalf of her husband and they became reconciled. She got no justice, she said, from the Court nor from —— (the agency).

A case of two years' contact, 1133, contains this closing entry:

Mrs. F was very much surprised to have a worker call [there had been no contact for four months]. She stated that her husband returned home about two months ago and everything in the home is just fine. There is no use for further visitations and under no circumstances will she allow anyone to speak to her husband since she does not wish to rake up any trouble. He is supporting the family and is controlling his temper.

Not only has there been failure in many cases to establish sufficient rapport with the wife to get adequate data upon the basis of which to determine the status of the case at closing, but often, too, the worker fails to see the husband.

Case records cannot, therefore, be said to contain the data necessary for determining to what degree there has been adjustment in domestic discord cases, not to mention the lack of data showing how adjustment was accomplished. This does not, of course, impair the value of such records to show the relative proportion of cases in which case-work techniques fail, since the categories indicating unsuccessful treatment, i.e., desertion, divorce, and continued discord, are clearly defined in case-records. What proportion of the cases ending in "no record of discord" and in "adjustment" should be added to this group of cases showing unsuccessful treatment one cannot say.

Further analysis of treatment techniques, accordingly, seems to lie in the direction of subjecting such techniques to a logical analysis from principles of social psychology. To what extent do case-work techniques for treating domestic discord conform to what are generally conceded to be principles of human behavior? How may accepted case-work techniques be revamped in line with such principles? What suggestions may one venture as derivatives from these principles of human behavior and conduct which would be of service in the treatment of domestic discord?

## CHAPTER X

### INDIRECT TREATMENT PROCESSES IN CASE-WORK

The statistical analysis of treatment techniques has been shown to be inconclusive in many respects due to lack of materials in the records to show clearly what has taken place as well as to the absence of a technique for determining what would normally take place without the intervention of the worker. These difficulties are those with which all studies attempting to measure the effect of treatment, for the present, will have to contend. Yet they are no less embarrassing, nor can they be waved aside upon the assumption that nothing can be done about it. If a statistical analysis alone is not satisfactory, the alternative is to subject the qualitative descriptions of techniques to a logical analysis as supplemental to the statistical.

One is not, in venturing upon a logical analysis of case-work techniques, introducing a new method of procedure. Such has always been the practice in the interpretation of statistical findings, as well as in the analysis of casual observations. There seems no reason why it cannot be used as well in connection with documents describing concretely the method of treatment. The writer has accumulated, accordingly, a large group of excerpts taken from case-records, which describe in detail the treatment techniques used in domestic discord cases. These have been classified and representative documents will be quoted and analyzed.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is apparent that no attempt can be made from this approach to determine the relative frequency with which a particular technique is successful or unsuccessful. Neither can it be expected that the excerpts cited repre-



## THE COURT OF DOMESTIC RELATIONS

The Court of Domestic Relations, as has been said, does not represent treatment directly by the case-worker. The rôle of the case-worker is that of an intermediary between the client and the court. Inasmuch as the formal method of the court is generally known, being like that of any court—the use of punishment either in anticipation or realization to force a certain mode of behavior—little will be said about it. More attention will be given to the handling of cases by the social service department and by the judge in chambers.

It is true that adjustments may occasionally follow court action, yet out of the 936 cases in which there had been court contact, only 33, i.e., 3.5 per cent, seemed to show any adjustment. Neither is there any evidence in these cases of adjustment following court action to show that the court process was necessarily responsible for the result. Other factors entering into the situation often offer a much more plausible explanation. Usually the husband feels that his wife has violated the confidential nature of the marriage relationship by taking him into court and so he blames her. Court action thus only widens the breach between husband and wife in the larger proportion of cases, if not in all. It should be quite obvious that the very nature of the marriage relationship is such that domestic accord cannot be accomplished by punishment or threat of punishment through a court of law.

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sent the particular techniques in anything more than the more general aspects. It may also be pointed out that the documents which follow are not restricted to those taken from the records of the United Charities and the Jewish Social Service Bureau but include illustrations from other organizations as well.

If anything more is attempted than to get support for the family, it usually takes the form described in the following excerpt, whether at the instigation of the judge or court worker:

The case had been known to the case-work agency since late in 1922. At that time the couple had been married about a year. The husband was native-born and the wife, foreign. The husband was a barber. The original complaint was that he was not supporting his wife though they were living together at the time. Several years later, the husband left and the case was taken into court. The judge ordered the couple to go into his chambers and talk matters over between themselves. He asked that the court worker be present to see that they did this. Then the excerpt tells the story:

"While in Judge's chambers, Mr. Y, who is a pale young man of refined features, and quiet manner, told worker that he was obliged to leave home due to the fact that his wife ruined his health by refusing to cohabit with him. . . . Furthermore, she had gone about the neighborhood making derogatory remarks about his lack of virility. He admits that his brother called the patrol wagon but says his wife came into the barber shop and flew at him attempting to strike him. . . . Mrs. Y did not deny these charges. Mr. Y continued to say that his wife had fed him constantly with delicatessen food, but when her brothers and mother visited she would take great pains to prepare a good meal. During the interview, Mrs. Y called her husband vile names. . . . From remarks of both Mr. and Mrs. Y it is evident that there is a great deal of sexual incompatibility. Furthermore, the situation is aggravated by a large number of relatives on both sides, Mrs. Y being the only sister among five brothers, while Mr. Y has four brothers and four sisters, all of whom seem to be much interested in the young people.

"Mrs. Y made no charges of cruelty against her husband, but said he was stingy. He stated that out of his earnings of \$26 a week, he could not afford to do more. At the time that they went into house-keeping he bought \$1500 worth of furniture, for which he paid cash. He is willing to return to his wife, providing she will do her wifely duty by him and also promise to keep away from her mother, whom he blames for a great deal of the trouble. It was agreed that Mr. and

Mrs. Y go home together with the understanding that the relatives of both were to keep away from the couple. Furthermore, they were to look for a flat in a neighborhood remote from all their relatives."<sup>1</sup>

Such an approach, whether on the part of the court, the court worker, or the family case-worker, seems to imply an intellectualistic psychology which has everywhere been discredited by those who are most conversant with how human beings behave. The implication of the procedure is that if one can get husband and wife to talk over their differences they can come to some agreement, which in its nature will solve their conflicts.

#### BIRTH-CONTROL INSTRUCTION

The giving of birth-control or sex-hygiene instruction may be considered a technique for treating domestic discord in some instances, though, of course, such instruction is often given for an entirely different purpose. Such treatment is not, obviously, given by the worker but constitutes another type of indirect treatment. Two lines of reasoning seem to be responsible for the use of this technique. The first is that large families only add to the economic burden which is often at the root of the discord situation. The other assumption is that the fear of pregnancy following sex relations is often responsible for sexual incompatibility.

The chief objection to this approach, from the standpoint of social psychology, seems to be that it is too simple and does not give credit to other factors in the situation, nor can it be used in all cases with equal success. The following case represents a type of outcome which is not unusual, but which

<sup>1</sup> Case Number 1250. Though of no importance in the analysis of the technique, the outcome may be given. The husband stayed at home for four days after the conference in court. The wife immediately filed suit for divorce and the case was closed a month later.

does not, nevertheless, invalidate the usefulness of the technique:

Mr. and Mrs. A had been married for eleven years when the case first came to the organization. Both were native-born; Protestants. Mr. A was a mail clerk. There were six children, ranging in age from 10 years to a few months. After the birth of the youngest baby, Mrs. A refused to return to her husband from the hospital, but went instead to her mother's. She said that Mr. A had never supported her, was very abusive, did not work regularly and was a religious fanatic. If she went back to her husband, Mrs. A said, it would only mean more children for whom they cannot provide adequately. She admitted to worker, however, that she thought it would be all right if she would just not have any more children. The worker, accordingly, referred her for birth-control instruction, after which Mrs. A returned home. A little more than a year later Mrs. A reported that she was again pregnant. She complained that her husband was working irregularly.<sup>1</sup>

Thus while in certain cases the results are not all that are anticipated, due either to the failure to make the instructions sufficiently complete as to create a desire to follow them out, or to the need for other treatment processes in conjunction with birth-control instruction, when placed in proper perspective as one of several parts of treatment, it may become an effective technique. Especially is this true when combined with more intensive instruction in sex hygiene. In this limited setting it promises more than many of the indirect treatment techniques.

#### HOUSEKEEPING INSTRUCTION

Housekeeping instruction by a visiting housekeeper is a method of treating domestic discord in cases where the husband complains that his wife is a "bad housekeeper." So far as the case-worker is concerned this constitutes indirect treatment since the instructions are given by persons trained

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 0335.

in home economics. The technique assumes, of course, that the standards of the husband are higher than those of the wife in cases where this instruction is given. Often the implication is, in fact, that what constitutes "bad housekeeping" in the mind of the husband is the same as that in the mind of the case-worker.

One of the difficulties of this technique is that it places the wife on the defensive and sometimes leads to such unforeseen results as are indicated in the following case:

Mr. and Mrs. W were 36 and 32 years of age, respectively, when they became known to the organization. They had been married 14 years at that time and had four children, three girls and a boy. Another child, a girl, was born during the period of contact which continued six years. The wife complained that her husband was abusive, had a very hot temper, and had a venereal disease. Mr. W countered with the accusations that his wife was immoral and a bad housekeeper. About the middle of the period of contact a visiting housekeeper was sent into the home though the worker had recorded:

"It is very evident that Mr. and Mrs. W are both very fond of each other but simply have gotten into the habit of quarrelling. A good deal of the difficulty is sexual. . . . Mrs. W denied her husband's accusations regarding her relations with others."

Four months later the following entry appears: "Mr. W in office by appointment. Advised that there is no need for visiting housekeeper to continue calling at the home, that it only makes it harder for him, that every time the visiting housekeeper leaves, Mrs. W assails him and accuses him of making a lot of trouble for her."<sup>1</sup>

The difficulty in the use of this technique lies in the failure on the part of the worker to recognize that "bad housekeeping" is ordinarily only a rationalization by which

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 1517. This case ended with separation of husband and wife. Since other techniques had supplemented that of housekeeping instruction, however, this cannot be interpreted as indicating failure of this particular technique. Other techniques used of which there is a record were: Court of Domestic Relations and conference.

the husband brings his belligerent attitudes toward his wife in line with group standards.

#### MEDICAL AND PSYCHIATRIC EXAMINATIONS

Another form of indirect treatment is that of medical and psychiatric examinations. Of the two the latter is much the more frequent in domestic discord cases. Medical examinations often precede psychiatric examinations, though sometimes they are given alone. The hypothesis in the mind of the case-worker seems to be that there may be some "organic" basis for the discord. This explanation is considered most frequently in cases where sex conflict or drunkenness are thought to be at the basis of the discord.

Psychiatric examination has become a much more common technique of treatment of late. The implication is that mental difficulties often are basic in the conflict between husband and wife. The purpose of the examination is to get at the nature of these difficulties and to make recommendations regarding the treatment of the case. The examination, obviously, hardly constitutes treatment unless the psychiatrist gives such along with the examination or at further contacts. He may, however, simply leave the treatment proper to others, including the case-worker. In these instances the treatment recommendations are ordinarily along one of two lines: (1) institutionalization or (2) re-education.

A few citations from the more complete records of this type of treatment will show not only the type of diagnosis current in the psychiatric approach to domestic discord, but indicate as well the form which the recommendations take.

Mr. and Mrs. B are both foreign-born. The case was first known as a relief problem, the problem of domestic discord entering about two years later when Mrs. B complained of abuse. The couple had been married for 12 years at this time and had four children, all girls.

Four months later Mr. B left his wife, returning eight months later, only to leave again after an interval of three years. It was after this separation that the wife was examined by the psychiatrist, the report of which follows:

"After having examined Mrs. B, Dr. ——— felt that the entire domestic difficulty is due to sexual incompatibility. He insists that Mrs. B must have been practicing birth control of one form or another, that lack of satisfaction of this instinct leads to irritability and later to hatred of man and woman. This explained the spite work done to each other by each other. Dr. ——— feared that this will grow worse with time. . . .

"Dr. ——— found it rather difficult to make recommendations in this case. He could not suggest that man and wife come together and have normal relations again, even though he felt that this would solve the problem in any other case, since he was of the opinion that sexual relations between Mr. and Mrs. B were strained for the last 6 or 8 years; it is too late to urge them to resume them. He therefore felt that the arrangement of legal separation and support is the best thing under the circumstances."<sup>1</sup>

This excerpt suggests that sexual incompatibility is commonly the accepted explanation of discord among psychiatrists. Recommendations with regard to treatment, accordingly, are usually in terms of bringing about an adjustment of sex relations or of calling attention to the futility of efforts toward accord, as suggested in the following case:

Mr. and Mrs. O were married at the ages of 23 and 18 respectively. Four children were born to them, two boys and two girls. Three years after marriage they became known to the organization. It was not, however, until four years later that domestic discord cropped out. At that time they were living together. Mrs. O complained that her husband was abusive, gambled and did not support her properly; she said he was excessive in his sexual demands. Mr. O countered with the accusations that Mrs. O's mother was always interfering in their affairs and that his wife had no control over the children. Six years

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 1632. Four years later this case was still current in the organization, husband and wife living apart.

after the first recognition of domestic discord the couple separated. The following is taken from the psychiatric reports:

"The neurological examination was negative for physical disorder. The following findings were elicited during the psychiatric examination.

"Evidence of a mild paranoid background (suspiciousness and some question of husband 'following her'). These suspicious ideas are loosely put together and are apparently not closely related to her behavior or to her other thought processes. Patient complains of unsatisfactory sex life; considers husband weak sexually; states that she has considerable sex stress and requests 'medicine' to suppress libido. Her children make her nervous. Patient wants to obtain a divorce, place the children and go to work.

"Impression is that of an ego-centric personality with evasion of all responsibility. Although she probably belongs to the cyclothymic reaction type her present behavior during the examination did not suggest hypomania (further observation may definitely determine the presence or absence of manic-depressive psychosis). She was cheerful but not euphoric but showed rather shallow thinking and some circumstantiality.

"We should recommend further social investigation of the relatives, obtaining their estimation of her daily behavior. The patient should also return to the psychiatrist for further study.

"In addition to the treatment report sent you on ——— it may be useful for you to know that our first impression of Mrs. O was that of an ineffectual individual who is not conscious of her social obligations. There was evidence also of a lack of normal maternal affection and tenderness. These findings alone strongly indicate a relative incompetency on the part of the woman to properly care for her children."<sup>1</sup>

Thus psychiatric reports often contribute little more to the treatment of domestic discord than to define the attitude of the case-worker as to whether husband and wife should continue to live together. Even where the marriage relation is considered worth strengthening and re-education is recommended, the psychiatric report contains little, ordina-

<sup>1</sup> Case 1459.



rily, to indicate to the case-worker how this is to be done. The following case contains such a recommendation:

Mr. and Mrs. X were married in January, 1915, according to the face-sheet, though the record indicates that Mrs. X was eight and a half months pregnant at the time and the child's birth date is given as October, 1915. Both were foreign-born. The case became known to the case-work agency about two years after the marriage, the husband complaining that his wife had been intimate with another man. His wife said that he did not support her properly and was stingy. He countered with the accusation that she was abusive, nagged him continually, and was extravagant. The wife left her husband about four years later, but returned in a few days. She left him again within a few months only to return shortly. Sometime in 1925 they separated and the case was closed in May, 1926. During this latter period of contact the wife was diagnosed by a psychiatrist as "psychoneurotic." The following excerpt describes the contact with the husband:

"Interviewed Dr. ——— at clinic. . . . Dr. ——— states he had a long talk with the husband and finds that he is almost as bad a nervous and mental condition as his wife. He says patient is a typical hysterical personality and husband is decidedly selfish. Both, he feels, need re-education in relation to their mental attitude toward life in general as well as their marital relations. There also seem to be economic difficulties. He is particularly desirous of having patient in the home and have her learn adaptation there rather than go away and evade the issue of making an amiable adjustment with her husband through her own efforts entirely. We recommend that worker talk with husband. Patient is very sociable and confidential. . . ."

An interview was had by the worker with the husband and reported to the psychiatrist:

"Report of the interview with husband was given to Dr. ——— who said he would consent to patient's leaving home providing she understands that this is a measure toward creating a different mental attitude toward her environments and to be a part of a re-educational program. Advises putting her in a private family where her surroundings will be pleasant, conducive to good habits, but not luxurious. He recommends that she be found some work that will be remunerative and also that she be interested in other social and educative activities."

Three months later the psychiatrist recommended separation, possibly divorce. It was at this time that the wife left for a few months, returning to stay some time before the final separation.<sup>1</sup>

#### PARTICULARISTIC TECHNIQUES

The difficulty with these indirect methods of treatment is that they are, generally speaking, too particularistic in approach. Thus they deal with either superficial aspects of the situation as does the court, with certain phases of domestic relations such as housekeeping and sex relations as though they were concrete units, or with certain physiological and psychological processes of the physician and psychiatrist which are taken as static entities. These entities are usually considered inherited and treated as explaining a situation, which is essentially one of interaction between husband and wife, in terms that do not take such interaction into account.

Yet the most significant aspects of domestic discord are the ways in which dissatisfaction in one form becomes defined in the attitudes of one person toward the other and tends to produce friction in other phases of relationship, which previously had been satisfactory. This process by which conflict becomes defined in the relations between husband and wife is not to be explained, nor treated, by pressing the elements into molds and considering them as static entities. These elements of conflict are by their very nature dynamic and must always be considered in relation to the contracting and expanding personalities of both husband and wife. As such they are but figures of speech, useful as symbols in describing the interaction between husband and wife, but in no wise to be confused with the process of interaction itself.

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 1424.

## CHAPTER XI

### DIRECT TREATMENT PROCESSES IN CASE-WORK

The most important phase of case-work treatment of domestic discord is that where the treatment is direct rather than indirect. Such treatment may be carried on in conjunction with the indirect methods already analyzed, or it may constitute the sole technique used. In general these techniques are of two types: (1) What has been called the "ordering-and-forbidding" for want of a better term, and (2) the persuasion technique. A third technique may be added, the conference, which is to be differentiated from the other two, not in terms of psychological mechanisms, for it often contains both persuasion and "ordering-and-forbidding," but in terms of the conditions under which contact between case-worker and clients occurs.

#### "ORDERING-AND-FORBIDDING" TECHNIQUE

The essence of the "ordering-and-forbidding" technique is that of commanding the disappearance of that which the case-worker considers undesirable and the appearance of the desired. Whether explicit or implied, there is always back of such commands a threat of coercion in some form, whether through courts, the police, neighborhood opinion, or what not. In a case, for example, where the wife accused her husband of abusing her—he said she went out with other men—this entry was found: "Worker told Mr. G that he must not abuse his wife or argue with her again; if he had

any complaints to make to come to the office immediately."<sup>1</sup> Or in another case in which the wife complained about her husband's drinking—the husband said he drank because conditions in the home were so bad—the case-worker recorded as follows: "Worker advised Mrs. D to stop her nagging and also to make her home attractive and to keep it clean."<sup>2</sup>

The following case contains a threat of court action:

Mr. and Mrs. M had been married ten years when their case came to the attention of the agency. There were five children. Both husband and wife were foreign-born. Mrs. M had complained repeatedly to the Court of Domestic Relations that her husband was lazy, drank, and did not support the family. He had been sentenced to the Bridewell several times but Mrs. M always secured his release shortly after he had been sentenced.

"Visited home. Mr. M and children at home. House and children very dirty and the babies half dressed. Mr. M said Mrs. M is working. Goes early in the morning and works ten hours. . . .

"Told him that if he would leave drink alone and work regularly that Mrs. M wouldn't have to work. Compared the neatness and cleanliness of the children when Mrs. M was home and the filth and dirt now. He said she wanted to work. I told him that was because she couldn't see the children without clothes and food."

Then four months later:

"I told the interpreter to explain very carefully to Mr. M that Mrs. M should not be working. That it was her job to stay at home and take care of the children. It is his job to support them, and if he does not do it, we will have to send him to the Bridewell. . . . I am going to check up his pay every two weeks, and if he does not come up to the standard he will have to give me satisfactory reason, or we will have to bring him into court. . . ."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 0414.

<sup>2</sup> Case No. 0362.

<sup>3</sup> Case No. 3001. Three years later, after a period of continual conflict, the wife reported that her husband had recently been doing better because he feared the worker from another organization which was also working on the case, and the case was closed by the first organization.

Threats, however, are not confined to court action. Mr. and Mrs. K had been married ten years when their case became known to the social agency. Two children had already been born and a third was born the following year. Both Mr. and Mrs. K were foreign-born. Mrs. K complained that her husband abused her and was very hot-tempered. The husband said that his wife was not true to him, was continually nagging him, and was hot-tempered also. Two years after the first contact one finds this account in which the threat is of mental examination rather than of court action:

Worker explained to Mr. K that his suspicions were not well-founded but that the investigation will be made in order to satisfy him that he has no grounds for suspecting his wife. [He had previously told of suspecting his wife of having immoral relations with a man with whom he worked because this man had bragged to him about having relations with a red-haired married woman and subsequently the husband had found this man's card in his wife's purse.] However, in view of the fact that the worker is soon leaving on her vacation, suggested to Mr. K that he try to make peace in the home until her return when she will have more time to devote to this matter. Also suggested that should his clues prove to her that his suspicions were ill-founded and should he still persist in accusing his wife steps will have to be taken toward investigating his reason and a mental examination may be necessary in this.<sup>1</sup>

#### USE OF IMPLICIT COERCION

All coercion is not by explicit threats, however; in fact it may well be that the source of the coercive effort is more

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 1560. Two years later husband and wife were still living together, though they had separated twice during the interval. The case was still current at the time the record was read and there was still conflict. The diagnosis at that time was sexual incompatibility and the suggested plan for treatment was "Get Mr. and Mrs. K in office in an effort to adjust domestic discord" and "see relatives to get their viewpoint and co-operation."

often undefined than otherwise. This technique consists in defining the situation in terms of community standards and may, or may not, involve reference to the persuasive element. Indirect reference to the persuasive element, in these cases the family group, is made in the following cases.

The H's were married at the time of first contact; the record does not reveal the date of the marriage. Both were foreign-born. The husband had left his wife and she complained that he had been abusive and gambled. When seen, Mr. H said that his wife was a poor housekeeper. Mrs. H said that her husband was jealous of her. Mr. H returned home shortly after first contact. The birth of a child twenty months later did not relieve the tension materially. The case was closed after a contact of three years with husband and wife still living together, but quarreling. The chief attempt at relieving the tension is described in the following excerpt:

Worker told both Mr. and Mrs. H that they should make an effort to please one another as most of their complaints were not those of grown-up people who should know better. Told them that for the sake of the baby both should try to make the home a place for her to be brought up in, in the proper manner. Also advised that the relatives be seen with reference to the coming to some solution of the problem.<sup>1</sup>

The next case shows even greater attempt on the part of the case-worker to mobilize the family as a means of making the definition of the worker more effective.

Mr. and Mrs. C had been married ten years when the case came to the attention of the agency. There were four children at that time, and another born during the period of contact, which covered more than ten years. Mrs. C complained that her husband did not support her properly. She

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 1257.

also complained that he gambled and had relations with other women. Mr. C said that his wife was a bad housekeeper and was slovenly in her dress. At the time of the first contact, husband and wife were living together. Mr. C was sent to the Bridewell two years later from the Court of Domestic Relations. A year later they were ordered by the same court to live apart. The major attempt described in the record to bring about an adjustment is contained in the following excerpts:

1-22-26. Phoned Mr. R, Mr. C's nephew and attorney, to apprise him of the fact that Mr. C is \$29 in arrears with his payments. Mr. R affected a manner of great frankness. He said he was thoroughly disgusted with his uncle, Mr. C. That he has quarreled constantly with him about his payments and responsibility for his family. . . . However, he promised that he would get in touch with Mr. C again and ask him to pay regularly.

Later . . . advised Mr. R that worker felt that if there was any possibility of not getting a fair trial in Judge ——'s court, the matter would be taken into another court on a separate maintenance bill, but that it is felt that such a step should be unnecessary if the R family would induce Mr. C to do his duty by his family.

Called Mr. R. . . . Mr. R said that he had had a quarrel with his uncle and he is not on speaking terms with him now. Worker suggested to him that he urge his mother to give Mr. C a *good talking to* [italics added] so that the man will appreciate the seriousness of his position. Mr. R promised to do so.

Met Mr. R one evening. . . . He told worker that he had spoken with his mother and that his mother had urged Mr. C to support his family properly, and to co-operate with this organization. Mr. C, however, feels that the family is "picking on him" and is becoming gradually alienated even from them.

5-13-26. Mrs. C telephoned. . . . She said that Mr. C has been diligently looking for a flat and that this date he went out with Robert looking for a flat. Advised her that the best thing that could arouse Mr. C to a sense of responsibility toward his family was just this and that she was to make it apparent to him that she was dependent upon

him and not upon this organization or anybody else. She said she was trying to do this.

Mr. C came to office at worker's request. . . . During the course of the interview he suddenly said that the —— [worker of another department] who claimed that she had seen him with a blonde woman [the woman mentioned several times in the record as the one with whom he is living] had been wrong because he was in Charleston, Illinois, on that day and not in the city at all. Advised him that since worker was not bringing the question of the other woman up at all, that it ill-befitted him to do so and that from now on this organization was not concerning itself with him or the other woman, nor even his own family, that it was up to him to be concerned and that certainly nobody could worry for him or work for him with his family if he were disinterested.

7-20-26. Mrs. C telephoned. Stated that Mr. C had been giving her \$2 a day in all this time and that he had not paid any rent at all. She said she now has eviction notice and must get out of her flat.

Consulted with —— [worker in another department] who felt that —— [agency handling case] should keep away from situation and perhaps relatives may be brought to a sense of their responsibility toward the family by the knowledge that —— was not interesting itself in the situation at all.

8-10-26. Wife living with her married daughter whose husband left home saying that he could not stand the crowded conditions in the home.

8-26-26. It was decided that —— [agency] close its contact with the C family in order that Mr. C and his relatives be forced to a sense of their responsibility toward the C's.<sup>1</sup>

The traditional standards of a specific group seem to be the chief source of authority in the following case.

Mr. and Mrs. F were separated when the case became known to the organization. They had been married but two weeks. Mrs. F was only seventeen, while her husband was

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 1005. Mr. C disappeared about two months later, and the case was closed at the end of that year.



ten years older. Mrs. F had left her husband, she said, because he had accused her of immorality. She also indicated that she suspected her husband of immorality. He was also stingy, she said. He replied to these accusations that she was extravagant, lazy, and the women with whom she associated were a bad influence upon her. Later, she complained that he made excessive sexual demands upon her. They were reconciled two months later, and in another two months Mr. F had left her. The marriage ended in divorce the following year.

Reconciliation seems to have resulted from the following appeal:

Mrs. F advised that her plan is to go to work and not to see her husband for a whole year. During this time she hopes he will prove his nobleness. Worker tried to reason with her and to point out that the security she will gain by living with her husband will mean freedom from her father's tyranny. [She told about how her father had always treated her cruelly and tyrannized over her at home.]

Worker also tried to explain to her the economic struggle she will have to endure because as an untrained worker she cannot earn more than \$15 a week. Worker tried to make her see some of the dangers which will face her since she is a young woman with a lively disposition for a good time. Worker also tried to point out to her the service she will render to her sisters and brothers if she can live with her husband and make a home for them with her; even though she agrees with worker in all the points she felt that she could not be reconciled with her husband, as it will be lowering her pride.

Then after the final separation another drive was made toward reconciliation:

Mrs. W [neighbor] and worker tried to make Mrs. F realize that her husband is probably very much in debt and is striving for a better future and it is up to her to work with him and not against him. Worker tried to make her realize the possibilities open to her as a married woman and the unnecessary trials she will endure by separating from her husband.

Tried to explain to Mr. F that he was aware of her peculiar characteristics before he married her and he promised in all good faith to help smoothen out her life. As a molder he has therefore failed because he is not giving the matter a fair chance, but Mr. F felt quite convinced that no amount of training or patience will solve the problem, that he has not the time to train her. . . . Worker tried to show him also the resentment for instruction which she showed had probably been developed under her father's training. Mr. F thereupon explained to worker that Mrs. F is naturally unappreciative, that she had nothing for which to hate her father, that she has gotten more out of him than she deserved, that the beatings he gave her were coming to her, as she went to dances while her mother was on her death bed. . . . Worker then tried to make Mr. F feel that he is not following the traditional customs of maintaining the family life rather than destroy it; and, etc. . . . Worker advised him that he bears a definite moral responsibility to this young girl as he has opened up a new life for her and, etc. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

#### THE PRESTIGE MECHANISM

In the previous citations reference to the persuasive element was used to buttress the definition of the situation in terms of community standards. Otherwise, however, the appeal is upon the same plane as that in the following excerpts, in which the outstanding features of the appeal are either the prestige of the worker, or the calling out of a "better self." In this latter phase, especially, the technique approaches what has been called "persuasion" except that it contains the moralizing element which distinguishes between the two techniques.

The G case has been known to the organization for fifteen years. There are four children. Both husband and wife are native-born. Mr. G was a member of the city fire department when the case first came to the attention of the organization but was later discharged for drunkenness.

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 1238.

Mrs. G complained that her husband was very abusive also. He took the "pledge" upon several occasions, but always resumed drinking shortly afterward. In 1923 he was committed to the Psychopathic Hospital and there diagnosed "periodical alcoholic." Here he recovered and was discharged. Mr. G complained that his wife was a bad house-keeper, had been intimate with another man who was the father of the children, and that she was not a proper person to look after the children. Later he added that his wife had disposed of a valuable ring he had given her.

We told him that it was not necessary that his wife tell him [what she had done with the ring]; that she was an apparently good woman and good mother and we felt that there was no excuse for his abusing her. She had shown black and blue spots but he still denied that he had struck her in rather a lifeless manner. *By degrees we increased our advice to him to respect his wife and refrain from hitting her* [italics added], either in body or in spirit. In spite of his denial that he had ever taken liquor we continued to allude to his having done so, and tried to arouse his pride in the fact that he was not drinking now and there was no excuse for his being brutal. He listened attentively, but there was a peculiar look in his eyes almost as though he was groggy.

A few days later Mr. G was arrested and taken to the Psychopathic Hospital and from there committed to Elgin Hospital for the insane. The diagnosis there was "alcoholic in a deteriorating condition." A few months later Mrs. G agreed to allow her husband to return home upon being assured that his "mind was all right." Upon receiving that assurance the organization wrote to her "urging her to try and make a home now for Mr. G and the children, *to live peacefully and train her children properly* [italics added]."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 3002. The case was still current with the organization at the time the record was read and there was still conflict between husband and wife, though they were living together.

The following case is, in its essence, much like the preceding one, except for the absence of what may be called the "crescendo" technique.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. V left home a few days after his wife had complained to the organization that he was unfaithful to her. Mr. V complained that his wife continually nagged him. They had been married eleven years, and had two children, a boy and a girl. The first child had been born prior to their marriage. After remaining away from home for about two weeks, Mr. V returned, remaining about two months, when he left again. The following excerpt records a contact at this time:

"Mr. V in office. He told worker that he was not living at home as he cannot tolerate his wife at all. . . . He claims that he sees the children practically every day and that he has not lost his love for them. He is supporting them regularly. He went on to say that he does not like the way his wife is raising the children. She is still very old-fashioned and set in her way and he wants his children to be brought up as Americans. Worker then spoke to him and explained that under the circumstances it was certainly his duty to see that his wife made connections whereby she would become Americanized. For instance, he could induce her to go to school during the day and that he could also take her among his own friends. He said, however, that he has lost all interest in her and does not wish to have anything more than is absolutely necessary to do with her."<sup>2</sup>

In the next case the burden of the responsibility is placed upon the wife rather than upon the husband as in the case of the V's. Mr. and Mrs. B were both foreign-born. The first

<sup>1</sup> That technique represented in the following line: "By degrees we increased our advice to him to respect his wife and refrain from hitting her."

<sup>2</sup> Case No. 1533. Subsequently, the case was taken into the Court of Domestic Relations, after which Mr. V returned home, staying a few days and leaving again. Two years later the case was still current. The diagnosis was separation due to incompatibility of parents (difference in degree of Americanization). The plan: "Refer Mrs. V to cooking class for training and social contacts," and "encourage Mrs. V to attend school."

contact was in 1914, five years after their marriage. Husband and wife separated in 1920, but went back together again the following year. There were accusations of abuse, nagging, and hot temper on the part of the wife; of bad housekeeping, jealousy, and nagging on the part of the husband. The excerpt relates to a visit at which time there were three children in the family:

Visited the B home. The house was in a terrible condition, the bed was unmade, everything was dusty and dirty, and the children were dirty and half-dressed.

Mrs. B still wishes to leave her husband as she feels that there will never be any harmony between them. She proposes to leave the two oldest children with Mr. B and take the baby with her. She knows that Mr. B is a dutiful father and will not abuse them. She states "she is still young and can make a living for herself at any time."

Mrs. B is selfish and is always thinking of her own comfort and pleasure. She has permitted her jealousy to overrule her and is constantly doubting her husband's fidelity. Also finding fault in the unimportant things.

Worker tried to make Mrs. B realize her responsibility as a wife and mother. Advised her that she ought to keep her house and children clean if she wishes to command the respect of her husband. Also advised her to have her husband's meals ready on time when he comes home from a hard day's work."<sup>1</sup>

The next case also shows an attempt to define the rôle of one of the members to a marriage contract, but this time it is the husband's rôle which is the center of attention, though the advice takes the form of criticizing the conduct of the wife.

Mr. and Mrs. K first became known to the organization in 1910 when Mr. K was unemployed. In 1913 Mr. K. left his wife and four children, but returned a week later. In the

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 1476. Two years later when the case was closed the situation remained unchanged.

interval following Mr. K's sentence to the Bridewell for non-support, two more children were born. Mr. K was released after spending a month in the Bridewell. In 1918, when he was again brought into the Court of Domestic Relations, he was examined by the court psychiatrist and the following diagnosis returned: "sociopath-predementia praecox—hebephrenia." Mrs. K said that her husband was lazy, called her vile names, and abused her. Mr. K accused his wife of immorality. The following excerpt describes a later contact.

Called. Worker tried to explain to Mrs. K that she had no right to taunt her husband with the fact that he is consuming food which he did not purchase, and to make it unpleasant for him to go to the table to eat, better to try and educate her husband up to the position of the head of the household and allow him to assume the responsibilities which are rightfully his; that is, the handling of all financial matters should go through him and when the family is in need of aid he should be the one to apply for it. She became very furious. Stated that worker is the only woman to whom she has ever spoken who did not sympathize with her and that she supposed hereafter she would have to turn her earnings over to Mr. K and let him use it as he sees fit."<sup>1</sup>

While the case-worker may take sides in the controversy between husband and wife as is shown in the preceding excerpts, occasions often arise in which something like equal emphasis is placed upon defining the rôle of each. The N's were married in 1921. First contact was several years later at which time they were living together and had two children. Mr. N accused his wife of neglecting the children and the house, going to various clubs and playing penny ante, and telling the neighbors about their affairs. Mrs. N said that her husband was abusive and lazy. An attempt at

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 1048. The situation remained unchanged at the time of closing.

reconciliation was made by the worker about a week after the original complaint was received and is described as follows:

Worker in an endeavor to effect a reconciliation asked both Mr. and Mrs. N to compromise and give themselves a trial of two weeks. Advised Mrs. N not to tell her private affairs to her neighbors but to keep them to herself and to spend less time at her clubs. Advised Mr. N to leave the house every morning at 6 o'clock in search of something to do and bring home in the evening whatever small sum he did make in order to show his wife that he at least was making an effort to find work. Both agreed to this and worker left advising that she would return in a few weeks to see how matters were.<sup>1</sup>

#### DEFINITION OF POINTS OF CONFLICT AS TRIVIAL

In the preceding section the case-worker attempts, for the most part, to bring the conduct of the individual into line with what is expected by the community. She interprets, accordingly, the conduct of the individual in terms of accepted standards and shows how there is need for redirection. The effectiveness of such a procedure is proportional to her prestige. In the cases following, the front is changed somewhat, though not entirely, to showing how one defeats his own ends by allowing trivial matters to interfere or by failing to realize the best that is in one. Prestige still plays a part in the effectiveness of this type of appeal though there is some semblance of appeal to reason rather than to blind obedience to the dictates of the group.

There had been domestic discord in the T family for ten years to the knowledge of the organization. Mr. and

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 1389. Conflict continued so the case was taken into court where both agreed to give up their clubs. A month later both reported discord. Another month and the wife said that things were running smoothly. The case was closed about a month later with the following comment: "An adjustment between Mr. and Mrs. N seems to be effected since Mr. N is conscientiously working and is supporting the family."

Mrs. T had been married four years at the time discord cropped out, but they had lived together for three years prior to marriage. During the last three years of contact Mr. T had deserted several times to live with another woman. Mrs. T's chief complaint was of her husband's infidelity. There were four children. The case was still current when the record was read. Husband and wife were living together but there was still discord. The following excerpt describes an attempt toward adjustment:

Tried to reason with Mr. T explaining to him that if he wished to make an attempt at understanding his wife and vice-versa, that all the incidents of the past must be forgotten and a fresh start made. He then stated that Mrs. T was very unattractive and he could not introduce her to the friends which he made. Pointed out to him that happiness is not a question of beauty and if he showed some interest in his wife he would appreciate some of the finer qualities. Mr. T stated that he had no desire to do this.

Tried to discuss the matter with both Mr. and Mrs. T, pointing out to each that they have some faults which the other must take into account and that if they were cognizant of these faults it would be easier to overcome them. Explained to Mrs. T that if she cared for her figure and made some attempt to better her English and perhaps go to the cooking classes and develop a more social attitude she would not find it so difficult to get along. On the other hand, told Mr. T that if he did not indulge in self-compassion to such an extent and took more of an interest in his family, he would find some things there he could appreciate. Further, told them how their actions toward each other and the continual quarreling is affecting their children, and have in particular affected John's mind, and that if they were not careful they would probably develop the same sort of an attitude in the other children. Asked Mr. and Mrs. T to think over what the visitor had told them.<sup>1</sup>

Mrs. S complained that her husband was abusive, hot-tempered, gambled, and had contracted a venereal disease

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 1455.



during a period of her pregnancy. There were two children at the time, but one was in an institution for the feeble-minded, where it died a little later. A third child was born during the period of contact—a period of three years—and things improved for a while. Then this child died and there was trouble again. Mrs. S was diagnosed “psychoneurotic” during period of contact. Mr. S was a salesman and complained that his wife nagged continually. For a time during the period of contact, Mrs. S refused to have sex relations with her husband for fear of contracting venereal disease. What the situation was in this regard at the time of closing was not determined. Four months prior to closing the situation remained unchanged, according to Mrs. S. The case was closed upon the basis of a statement, apparently, by the husband that they were getting along well together. An unsuccessful attempt to bring about an adjustment in the early contact with the case, is described as follows:

Pointed out to both Mr. and Mrs. S that they are acting very childishly. That they really have no grounds for complaint at all. That it is primarily a question that they ought to be able to adjust themselves, as no one can make them live happily together if they do not make the effort themselves. Both Mr. and Mrs. S agreed to this and stated that they would try their best to have peace in the home. The worker should call in about three or four weeks and note for herself the improvement that may have been made.<sup>1</sup>

In the next case there is some semblance of the interpretation of the behavior of the individual as a means of re-directing it, but it is throughout in moralistic terms, though with the implication that there is something “within” of a higher order.

Mr. and Mrs. B were married in 1918. A child was born the following year and they became known to the organiza-

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 1385.

tion about three and a half years later. At that time they were living together and Mrs. B complained that her husband did not support her properly, was lazy and neglected his dress and person to the extent that he was offensive to her. Both Mr. and Mrs. B were foreign-born. Mr. B left his wife about a year after first contact, but returned shortly, only to leave again. The bulk of the six-volume record is taken up with correspondence between the organization and Mr. B after he had left his wife. Mr. B early indicated that he wished a divorce, only to be opposed by the organization. He finally secured a divorce nevertheless. The excerpt is from a letter written shortly before the divorce was secured:

To summarize my review: you are magnifying and exaggerating the ills of your ill-mated marriage and wasting your energy on securing a legal proof of your freedom, neglecting to make use of your virtual freedom which you are enjoying since last year. You are discoursing on love and various emotions at the expense of sound thinking about immediate realities. You are wasting your abilities on talking various things without buckling down to work on any one of them. You expect and demand aid in obtaining your fluctuating desires without considering either their fairness or feasibility in obtaining them. And as of old, my advice to you is: pull yourself together, think clearly, look for the difficulty within you and not around you, and the rest will take care of itself.<sup>1</sup>

The essence of the "ordering-and-forbidding" technique, thus, is the definition of situations categorically in terms of right and wrong if there is any attempt to do more than to give commands. In any case the wishes of the person are left out of account for the most part, while pressure is brought to bear upon him to realign his conduct in terms of group standards. The implication is, of course, that the person can revamp his conduct by an act of will, and that the

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 1591.

way to get him to do so is to force him to by mobilizing the collective will of the community, i.e., by appealing to the courts or less directly to group opinion.

The "ordering-and-forbidding" technique takes two forms: (*a*) Definition of situation in terms of group standards. Here the worker plays the rôle of the judge, the wise person, the father, the priest, and pronounces judgment upon the case in terms of praise and blame. One person may be to blame or the other, or both, though not for the same things. Pronouncements are categorical and often not without a hint of coercion, and commands are given as to how one must conduct himself in the future. (*b*) Definition of the situation, or elements in it, as trivial and therefore unimportant. The worker again poses as an authority, and the pronouncements are as categorical as under (*a*), but ridicule is substituted for threats, explicit and implied, as the coercive element.

The effectiveness of this general technique, in whatever form it may be used, is dependent upon whether or not the worker has the prestige sufficient to carry her judgment across, or is able to produce the force necessary in getting her commands obeyed, whether that pressure be exerted through the courts, police, the family, or neighborhood opinion. The difficulty is that the repressive process on the part of the couple is likely to lose its effectiveness in time even though successful at first, and that this method generally deals with only symbols of discord rather than the discord elements themselves. So, even though the repression is complete, in time the discord finds, or tends to find, expression in other channels and so the conflict situation is revived.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE PERSUASION TECHNIQUE IN CASE-WORK

The persuasion technique is that by which the case-worker attempts by advice, argument, and reasons to influence behavior in the direction of adjusting conflicts. Instead of taking the dictatorial attitude as she does in using the "order-and-forbidding technique," her attitude is that of one who attempts to see a problem or situation from all sides. Instead of categorical pronouncements of right and wrong, the worker tries to show that the best interests of the persons lie in conducting themselves in the fashion suggested. Or better yet, she parries a bit to discover what reasons are likely to be the most convincing and then uses these in support of her advice.

Three types of appeal, at least, may be found in case-records: (*a*) appeal to will power (*b*) appeal to fear, and (*c*) appeal to love and affection for one's children. Of the three the first is probably the most commonly used, while the latter is likely to be the most effective.

The simplest form of an appeal to the will is that where the worker as much as says, "You can do differently if you want to, so why not try?" This is substantially what must have been said in the following case:

Mr. and Mrs. S were both native-born. They had been married thirteen years and had two children. The case became known to the organization as a result of the desertion of Mr. S, the fourth time that he had left his family. Mrs.

S said that her husband had always been intemperate and unkind. When Mr. S returned a few months later he explained that he had left because his wife went out with other men at night and drank. Mrs. S said that she had learned to drink because her husband wanted her to. "Mrs. S agreed that she could stop drinking by making up her mind not to drink any more and she would do this."<sup>1</sup>

The technique used in the P case is very similar to that above. Mr. and Mrs. P had each been married previously and divorced. Mrs. P entered into her second marriage relationship within less than the year interval required in divorce cases at that time. Then she married Mr. P without the formality of divorcing her second husband. Shortly after this Mrs. P had her second marriage annulled. It was about this time that Mr. P left her and the case came to the organization, Mrs. P complaining of non-support. She also said that her husband called her vile names and abused her. He replied that she was immoral, hot-tempered, and too much attached to her relatives. The excerpt<sup>2</sup> describes an attempt to get the two together again:

Mr. and Mrs. P in office. Mrs. P explained to her husband that she did not feel she could trust him after the way he has treated her in the past. . . . He has no bad habits such as drinking or gambling. Felt that for this reason his wife had nothing to complain about. First, he said he did not want Mrs. P to see her relatives or her friends. . . . When he saw that Mrs. P would not give up her family for him, he said that she could go to see them as she wanted or that they could come to her house when he was not there. . . . Mrs. P would not consent to this arrangement. . . . Mr. P kept saying that all he demand-

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 0530.

<sup>2</sup> Case No. 1132. They went back together shortly after this, but separated seven months later. When the case was closed nine months after separation, Mr. P was suing for divorce.

ed of his wife was that she should be at home at meal times so that he could have his dinner. . . . The final decision was that Mr. P should try to prove to his wife that he will be thoroughly reliable and dependable in the future and that she will never regret returning to him.

In the next case the concessions agreed to by both husband and wife take on the form of a concrete plan of conduct. Mr. and Mrs. R had been married nine years and had four children. Sickness was the initial problem, and it was not until a year later that domestic discord was recognized. Mrs. R complained at this time that her husband gambled and he replied that his wife was a nag and allowed her family to interfere too much in their affairs. The organization called the two in for a conference, the result of which was: "It was finally decided that Mr. R should not go out and play cards at all during the next couple of weeks and that Mrs. R should be very careful and not nag or scold him."<sup>1</sup>

The F case was known to the organization for eleven years. At the time of first contact they were not married but living together. Through the efforts of the organization the marriage was performed in court. Two children had already been born and one subsequently. There were several separations and the husband finally secured a divorce on the grounds of cruelty. But in the interim both husband and wife accused each other of immorality. Mrs. F admitted it, giving as her excuse that her husband had his "fun" so she would, too. Mr. F admitted playing cards and keeping irregular hours but denied sexual delinquency.

After a very lengthy conversation and much arguing the F's agreed to the following proposition: that for the next two weeks Mr. F

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 1050. No further contact was had with Mr. R, but his wife reported that he was not gambling any more and they were getting along well together, so the case was closed four months later.

would spend every evening at home with his wife and family. Mrs. F promised to have her meals on time and not to nag or recall the past.

Then two years later after a short separation:

First spoke to Mrs. F who advised that conditions in the home have been very favorable since Mr. F returned. . . . Mrs. F is very happy over the change and very willing to give her husband another chance to make good. Advised Mrs. F that a great deal of harmony in the home depends on the wife, and that if she would forget her suspicions regarding her husband, conditions would be all right.

Went down to the store and talked to Mr. F. . . . Claimed to be perfectly willing to do the right thing at home, if his wife would forget her suspicions regarding him. . . . He assured visitor that there was absolutely no truth in her statements regarding his relations with other women. If she will promise to keep out of the store with the exception of such times when he has to be away, and take care of the house properly, there will be no trouble. Wanted visitor to speak to Mrs. F again and make this very clear to her. Visitor went back and spoke to Mrs. F who promised to try and forget her suspicions and do her share in the house.<sup>1</sup>

The B case became known to the agency when the family was reported by another social agency as needing assistance. Mr. and Mrs. B had been married about ten years at that time. The first child was conceived prior to marriage. Eight children in all were born to the couple. After the immediate financial crisis passed, there was no contact for a year, when Mr. B was sent to the Bridewell for non-support. In October he was again sent there for three months. This experience did not do him any good, his wife said, for he was just as drunk and cruel as before. Then the efforts of the worker:

Visitor made Mr. B promise four things: (1) that he will stay away from home for two months, (2) that he will not drink, (3) that he will bring his pay each day to the minister who will divide it up as

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 1353.

he thinks it should be between the family and Mr. B, and (4) that he will attend the church services. Mr. B seemed willing to promise these things.<sup>1</sup>

Agreements are not always drawn up with such attention to detail as indicated in the preceding cases. The following case shows a curious combination of reality and make-believe.

Mr. and Mrs. R had only been married eleven months when they became known to the organization. Mr. R had left his wife. He had previously been taken into the Court of Domestic Relations upon complaint of his wife and had served short sentences. When he returned to his family—there was one child—a month later he was arrested. His wife complained about his drinking. He said that he and his wife had always quarreled about foolish things which she did not want to do. One of these things was associating with the woman on the floor above, who was a trouble-maker. He further said that he wanted his wife to do as he asked her, and when asked to be more explicit he said it was in their private matters and he was ashamed to tell, but that a wife is supposed to do certain things that her husband wants her to do. Then the following agreement was recorded:

Both of them finally promised not to quarrel with each other for one week from date even though the other may try to start it and both promised to pretend that they had just been married and that it is their first week of married life. Mr. R will look for work and not drink at all during this week.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 0043. He did these things for one month, then he spent his entire pay check and did not appear at church services. The case was current and the situation was unchanged when the record was read more than two years later.

<sup>2</sup> Case No. 0409. Several desertions followed, but they were still living together when the case was closed a year later, though Mrs. R complained at that time that he was not supporting her and she planned to leave him.



The following agreement has much in common with the preceding one. The excerpt describes what took place at one contact, and reveals the worker as playing a comparatively passive rôle during the first of the interview, and then formulating a plan of conduct, seemingly in accord with the circumstances revealed by husband and wife.

Mr. and Mrs. B had both been married previously and divorced. They had one child, born a year after their marriage and about three years old at the time of first contact with the agency. Husband and wife were living together at the time. The contact described gives the chief complaints and occurred about three months after first contact:

Mrs. B complained that in the past four years he has never made a dress for her [her husband is a tailor] or bought her a pair of shoes or anything for the baby. Her allowance for the table is certainly not enough to cover this. She has been forced to supplement this allowance with some money which she has in her own private savings account from the time that she used to work. Explained to Mrs. B the present working conditions and told her that if this was the only bone of contention between them, she must certainly make every effort to be a little more considerate as she should be very thankful that Mr. B is earning as much as \$17 a week, as there are several hundreds of people who do not even earn \$5 a week. To this Mrs. B replied that the money was not the only bone of contention between them; that he was a very selfish nature; that he never shows any concern when she is ill or puts himself out in any way to help her and to take care of the baby when she is unable to do so. He is always angry and does not speak to her. He either locks himself up in his room and sleeps, or visits with his mother or sister or any other relative. He never seems to have any time for his wife. Mr. B's retort to this was that since their child has been six months old, Mrs. B insisted on having the child sleep with them, and she places her between them to prevent their having marital relations. Her excuse was that the baby's bed was too small. Mr. B therefore bought a larger bed, and when he reminded his wife of her duty to her husband, she still persisted in refusing, making up one excuse after another. He therefore cannot treat her very

considerately during the day because she treats him in this manner during the night. Mrs. B then said that she has no feeling toward him and therefore cannot cohabit with him. He lives within himself and does act as though he were a stranger to her. He has never made any effort to make her love him, nor has he shown any love toward her. Mr. B complained that Mrs. B is always gossiping with the neighbors and the chief subject of conversation is their husbands. Mrs. B is always ready to accept anything her neighbors tell her about her husband, and he does not like this. Mrs. B answered this by saying that when she is ill, her husband does not bother to bring in anything from the grocery store, but that she must ask the neighbors to do this for her. They themselves see how he neglects her and this brings on conversation. There were numerous other complaints brought up, first by one and then by the other. Mrs. B is of the opinion that if they should separate, he will be able to get along better financially as they will break up the flat and she will rent a room for herself and the child. Or, she and the child will go to her sister in ———. He will only have to support the child as she will go out and work for herself.

Explained to Mrs. B that this is a very bad plan. In the first place if he cannot afford to pay \$30 a month for the five rooms which are really very desirable, he will certainly be unable to pay for her rooms and for his own room separate. As to staying with her sister, there was nothing definite about a plan of that kind, and furthermore, he has as much right to the child as she has, and if the child is at all to be considered, the first thing to do is to try and keep the home intact.

Reviewed with them the various points which had been brought up by both and tried to show in which way these things could be eliminated. As to the money part of it, advised that they try to rent one of the rooms as this will enable them to meet the rental. As Mr. B had advised that he was told by his attorney that should he be able to prove that his daughter of his first marriage is working he will not have to support her; advised him to learn the address of his former wife so that worker may be able to learn whether or not the girl is working. In the meantime worker is to get in touch with Mr. B's attorney, get the status of the case and see if it were not possible, in view of Mr. B's present financial conditions, that the order for the support of the girl should be canceled. Mr. B does not like to discontinue these payments, as he fears that should the matter be taken into

court, it will involve him in a great deal more trouble as the court order is for \$12 a week, whereas for the past year or two he has been paying only \$6. He might, therefore, have to pay up the deficit in all these weeks. Asked Mrs. B if she would be satisfied if Mr. B gave her the additional \$6 which he is now giving to his daughter by his first marriage. Without taking a moment's time to think it over, she nodded her head and said "yes" most vehemently.

It seems obvious that Mrs. B does not have much affection for her husband. She likes pretty things, and as he does not provide them for her she is as disagreeable as she can be with him.

Before worker left, a promise was exacted from Mr. and Mrs. B that each would do his and her share in overcoming the difficulties that have arisen between them and in trying to establish harmony in the household. They will try to rent out a room, thus relieving the financial stress somewhat.<sup>1</sup>

#### THE PLEDGE TECHNIQUE

The pledge technique is a variation of the persuasion technique where the appeal is to will power. The implication is that a signed promise or agreement is more binding than a verbal one. In the following case the husband refused to sign the agreement. Just what direct connection there is between the conflict element and the terms of the agreement is not clear, but apparently it was thought that there was some relationship.

Mr. and Mrs. R had been married about nine years at the time of first contact. Four children had been born previously and one subsequently. Contact covered a period of six years. During this period there were five brief periods of separation. The accusations of each are typical of cases of "sexual incompatibility": the wife said that her husband was abusive, stayed out late at night and gambled, was hot-

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 1251. Mr. and Mrs. B continued to live together for a year and a half after this contact, then separated for six months, then went back together again. Contact was continued for another two months, but discord continued at closing.

headed, called her vile names, and was immoral; the husband retorted that his wife was a poor housekeeper, extravagant, and refused to have sex relations with him. The record reveals that the worker considered the discord due to "sexual incompatibility" as early as nine months after first contact. This diagnosis is repeated at intervals. The following excerpt describes a contact more than three years later:

"She [Mrs. R] explained that the chief difficulty between Mr. R and herself was the question of sexual relations. Mr. R wants her to have more children and she feels that she is not physically able to do so. When the question of birth control was discussed Mr. R grinned sheepishly. His wife had been advised at the dispensary that her husband should use protective measures. He, however, did not wish to bother with them. He stated, however, that he would have no objection to Mrs. R's use of such measures provided they in no way interfered with him.

The "pledge" presented to both six months later for their signatures was as follows:

As per agreement of this date Mr. R promises to send \$15 weekly to this office which shall be given to his wife to be used for food, including milk bills. He promises also to be responsible for the rent, light, and coal bills; to provide clothes for all members of the family and to pay for any medical care necessary.

By the same agreement Mrs. R promises to prepare daily and regularly three meals a day. She will take adequate care of the children, see that they are clean and neatly dressed for school. She will not go to work but stay at home and take proper care of her household.

A worker from the ——— will visit at least once a week in order to supervise these arrangements.

Both were called in to sign the agreement. Mr. R refused to sign until an additional clause was inserted to the effect that if the arrangement did not work out he might leave the home. He also expressed doubt whether he could pay as

much as the agreement called for. Mrs. R then indicated that she doubted whether the amount agreed to was sufficient. This made her husband angry and he declared that his wife was trying to "bleed him to death." Then the worker took a hand:

Mr. R was informed that since he could not adhere to his original intentions, which had seemed to us good ones; since he changed his mind so frequently and did not know what he himself wanted, it would probably be best to settle the matter in court and steps would be taken toward this end immediately.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. B had left his wife at the time of the first contact with the B case. There was one child by a former marriage of Mr. B—the only child in the family. Mr. and Mrs. B had been married two years. Mrs. B said that her husband did not support her properly, drank, and was abusive and gambled. Mr. B said that his wife called him names, nagged him, and was a poor housekeeper. About a month and a half after separation they were reconciled. A year and a half later Mr. B left again. The worker on the case had them both in the office and finally decided that because Mrs. B was so nervous and excitable no definite arrangements could be made so that the case could be sent to court. The couple were dismissed, but returned shortly, and announced that they had decided to become reconciled. They signed the following "pledge":

I, B. B. promise to support my wife, J., properly, not to call her names and to treat her with due respect.

I, J. B., promise not to call my husband, B., names and to keep the home clean and have his meals ready on time.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 1239. The case was taken into court and finally closed by the agency without there having been any adjustment.

<sup>2</sup> Case No. 1244. Following this there was no complaint for six months. Then followed three separations and two sentences to the Bridewell in a

In the R case the pledge takes the form of a signed promise on the part of only the husband with the wife and worker as witnesses. The R's had been married about a year when they came to the attention of the agency. Mrs. R had been married previously, divorcing her first husband. She had four children by her first husband with her, and there was another child at the time of first contact, born four months after her marriage to Mr. R. A second child was born during the period of contact. It was five months later that the attempt at adjustment described in the excerpt was made.

Called at the R home. . . . Mr. R is a good looking man with light hair, blue eyes and of medium stature. When reminded of the fact that he had been abusive to Mrs. R and the children dreaded his return he hung his head and said nothing. Later he said he often quarreled with her because she seldom had her rooms in order and he enjoys a clean home.

Mrs. R is willing to take him back providing he stops drinking; does not abuse her and gives her enough money to adequately support the children so she would not be forced to go to work. Told him, if he thought he could do this, to come to the ——— office this afternoon, and in the presence of Mrs. R and visitor he would have to sign a statement that, beginning today, he will be responsible for all bills, will not drink, and will not abuse Mrs. R. He promised to do this.

Later, Mr. and Mrs. R in office. Mr. R was very happy and willingly, but with great difficulty, signed attached statement. He is willing that ——— visit the house at intervals and that Mrs. R report as to his behavior. Told him that whenever he had any grievances, ——— would listen to him also, and will attempt to make necessary adjustments. He seemed greatly relieved and went home with his face beaming.

The statement signed follows:

"This is to certify that I am today returning to my family who are

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period of four years, ending in Mrs. B being sent to jail upon the charge of assault with a deadly weapon, sworn to by her husband, following which the case was closed.

at present living at ——— street, and will be responsible for all bills incurred. I promise to refrain from drinking intoxicating liquors, and to act the part of a competent father to my five children.”<sup>1</sup>

#### APPEAL TO FEAR

Fear is usually a large part of the motivating element wherever the “ordering-and-forbidding” technique is used. But with this technique, it is the fear of authority and not of natural consequences which are rationally presented by the case-worker. Where the appeal is to fear in this latter sense the technique belongs to the persuasion group.

The G case became known to the organization due to the desertion of Mr. G. At that time they had been married six years and had three children. Subsequently, five more children were born. Mr. G returned shortly and little contact was had with the family for several years. Then Mr. G applied for assistance in getting work. After that followed another interval of little contact, ended by Mrs. G complaining of her husband’s drinking and abuse.

The case-worker took a hand and recorded as follows: “Mr. G promised to quit drinking and to behave and support his family. He seemed to realize he had gone the limit and now that they had been thrown out on the street [evicted], he realized it was time to do differently.”<sup>2</sup>

The C family became known to the agency while Mr. C

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 2881. The “reconciliation” lasted a month. Two months later Mr. R left his family after Mrs. R had had him in police court for abusing her. More than a year later the case was still current and Mr. R still away.

<sup>2</sup> Case No. 0444. Later Mr. G complained that he could not live with his wife any longer for no matter how hard he worked, they never had anything, due to the poor management of his wife. A year later he left for a while then returned to accuse his wife of infidelity. It was about this time that the record was read.

was in jail on an embezzlement charge. At that time they had been married almost twelve years and had three children. Upon Mr. C's release and return home he accused his wife of having had relations with other men during his absence. She countered by saying that he drank constantly. Then the attempt on the part of the worker:

Mr. C stated that he is going to stop drinking; that he will settle down and attend strictly to "business." He said that he realized that unless he changes his habits very speedily he will be unable to stop at all. Mrs. C agreed to try it again, but that if he did not keep his promise she would go to Boston [to her parents] at once. She said she was afraid that he did not mean it very strongly and that as soon as visitor was gone he would begin to abuse her for reporting him. He declared he would not, and Mrs. C said she would call the police if he did.<sup>1</sup>

#### APPEAL TO AFFECTION FOR CHILDREN

Appeals to one's affections for his children may be presented in many forms by the case-worker, some of which are more effective than others. Yet few cases show the use of this appeal even in the most simple forms. This is interesting to note since the general tendency in family case-work is to give attention chiefly to those cases in which there are children.

The first case is one in which the appeal in terms of the welfare of the children is directed toward the wife, advising her to repress her own impulses for the sake of her children.

Mr. and Mrs. M had been married nine years when they became known to the organization. There were four children at that time and one born later. Mr. M had left his wife, but

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 0425. Mr. C left his wife "on business" two months later and his letters became less and less frequent until a little more than a year later they ceased coming. After that the worker interviewed a man who confessed he had had sex relations with Mrs. C and had contracted a venereal disease from her. Three years later Mrs. C was discovered living with another man.



returned later. During the period of contact, covering seven years, the case had been in court. Mrs. M accused her husband at various times of drinking, abusing her, gambling, nagging and of immorality. He, on the other hand, said that his wife was a nag and hinted that there were "sexual differences." No attempt seems to have been made to get at these. Five years after first contact some attempt was made to get an agreement with regard to the family budget. Six months later Mrs. M reported that things were going better. Two months after this appears the following report:

Mrs. M in office very much excited. States that her husband told her he has been living with another woman for the past two years.

Advised Mrs. M that in view of the fact the children are all small and she would be unable to go out to work, that it would be best for her to allow things to go on as they are and to do her utmost not to aggravate him by nagging him in any way. It is her duty as a mother to her children to keep the home intact and to consider the welfare of her children.<sup>2</sup>

In the Q case the appeal is to both persons. Mr. and Mrs. Q had been married ten years when they became known to the organization. Contact continued for four years. There were three children. Mr. and Mrs. Q had had sex relations prior to marriage with the result that his wife made the typical complaints: that her husband called her vile names, abused her, was hot-tempered, and made excessive sex demands upon her. His reply was that she was immoral—a typical retort. They separated for a time about two years after first contact with the organization. It was after they went back together again that the following was reported:

<sup>2</sup> Case No. 1306. Seven months later there was still conflict and the case was closed when Mrs. M refused to allow her husband to be seen, saying he was doing better. At that time Mr. M had not been seen for seventeen months by the worker, and the outcome is doubtful.

There are continual quarrels, Mr. Q believing his wife at fault and claiming he has no reason to miss his home, since he would get there night after night and find no one there, but a meal on the table. Urged that Mr. and Mrs. Q reconsider the matter, continue to keep their home together, each making special efforts to make the home cheerful and the proper place for children to grow up in, but Mr. Q said that this is out of the question. "She hates me, I know, and why should I live in a house of hate?"<sup>1</sup>

In the Z case the appeal takes a little different turn, being not in terms of the welfare of the children, but rather in terms of respect for their father. Mrs. Z's original complaints were that her husband drank and gambled. They separated for a month, sometime later. Things went more smoothly for a short time and then the same complaints again. Mrs. Z finally threatened to take him into court and after that she had no difficulty with him for a few months, so the case was closed. She was determined, she said, to leave him should he have a relapse. During the period of contact the following appeal was made by the worker:

Pointed out to Mr. Z that because of his youth and fine family he should make special effort to quit drinking. Explained to him about the drink cure, to which he refused to listen at first, but finally agreed to consider it if his family would be provided for during the interval. Advised Mr. Z of the unwholesomeness of the surroundings under which his children are subjected. When confronted with what opinion his children would have of him when they saw him in his drunken stupors, he stated that this never occurred as the children were always in bed when he got home. He was almost certain that the children did not suspect that there was anything irregular in the home.<sup>2</sup>

The persuasion technique, as these excerpts show, attempts by an appeal to reason to get the individual or indi-

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 1168. They continued to live together, but otherwise the situation remained unchanged at the time of closing.

<sup>2</sup> Case No. 1241.

viduals to change their conduct in accordance with the suggestions of the worker, whose rôle is that of counselor. Authoritative pronouncements no longer play a rôle in the process, but instead an appeal is made to the rational processes of the individual. Three types of appeal have been found in case-work, though these do not represent the extent of the logical possibilities. These are:

a) *Appeal to will*.—The worker virtually says to the individual, "You can do differently if you only will to do so. Why not end the conflict by erasing the conflicting elements?" So the program of conduct is outlined in accord with the demands of the other and one is expected to follow it out by an act of will.

b) *Appeal to fear*.—The fear element in this appeal is not that of the coercive activities of the police and the courts, but what are defined as the inevitable results of a certain line of conduct. That is, the worker does not threaten court action, but only points out that such conduct will inevitably lead to such action, though she, of course, would not be a party to it. Or, it may be in terms of community action, such as loss of prestige, etc. Or, still again, place one's family in jeopardy, or lose their respect, etc.

c) *Appeal to love for children*.—This type of appeal may be simply in terms of the protective impulses of parents or it may take on more complex forms such as the desire to retain their respect in later life.

But whatever the appeal used, the essential facts are that the persuasion technique is an attempt to get the individual to do something by persuasion and argument which he did not want to do at the outset. The drive is to get the individual to take over the judgments and attitudes of the worker, not because they are authoritative pronouncements,

but because they conform to what seem to be a rational interpretation of the facts in the case. The persuasion technique implies a decision to accept or reject the solution offered by the worker "on the spot" and herein lies the weakness of the technique. It is calculated to produce a change in overt behavior without due regard to the necessary covert process involved in a change in attitudes and wishes.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE CASE-WORK APPROACH TO TREATMENT

Another of the direct methods of treatment in case-work may be called the conference technique. To characterize this mode of approach as a technique, however, requires a shifting of the basis of classification. In describing the "ordering-and-forbidding" and persuasion techniques, emphasis has been placed exclusively upon the psychological mechanisms involved. The conference technique has to do with the structural elements, the stage setting so to speak. So far as the mechanisms are concerned this technique usually includes the intermingling of the "ordering-and-forbidding," persuasion, and even others. The essentials of the technique are that both husband and wife are brought together in an artificial setting—an office—presided over by an arbitrator, the worker. Each person is interviewed in the presence of the other, and other persons than the worker may either "sit in" on the interview or take part in it. If there are other persons present these usually are supervisors, interested persons, such as relatives, friends, ministers, or persons especially qualified to give advice in domestic discord cases.

The interview of both husband and wife in the home, whether by workers alone or with the assistance of other persons, is not a form of the conference technique, because such an interview lacks the possibilities of manipulation which are afforded where the interview is in the office of the worker. The stage can be set in the office, but not in the home. Neither does an interview of either husband or wife

by more than one person represent the conference technique because in this instance the second essential is lacking, namely, the appearance of giving each person an equal hearing.

One may differentiate at least six forms of the conference technique without exhausting the logical possibilities (see p. 96). These forms do not seem to have developed by any conscious process on the part of the worker but represent instead variations introduced into the technique upon the spur of the moment and with little or no realization that they represented changes in form. But whatever the variations—the interview of husband or wife separately, either before or after the joint interview—the essential feature of the interview of both together somewhere in the process classifies it with the conference technique.

#### CONFLICT IN CONFERENCE

The following case gives a picture of conflict in a conference. The X case came to the organization as the result of unemployment of the husband. It was not until two years later that domestic discord was recognized. At that time the husband had left. Mr. and Mrs. X had been married less than four years and had two children. They were both comparatively young, twenty-six and twenty-three respectively. The excerpt records an interview shortly after domestic discord was recognized:

Mr. X in office. He impresses one as being a carefree and rather irresponsible fellow altogether too young and immature to have the care of two children. As the subject of his invention was dear to his heart, worker brought this first into the discussion. From this center of interest he gradually gave the following information: [then follows educational and work history, with the explanation that his frequent

change of jobs was because his wife was never satisfied with what he was doing].

In regard to his home life, Mr. X was rather reticent. He finally admitted that his wife was mostly to blame for the domestic difficulty, that she would offer him no encouragement in his work, and that she was a drag on him rather than an inspiration, that the home was never clean and comfortable, that the children were mean and altogether a nuisance and that in general home life was very disagreeable. At this point L [the wife] arrived at the office and the husband and wife started to scrap like the pair of children that they were. She said that while in the store he bought \$35 worth of cookies and cakes to sell and give away for Christmas and that this money was altogether wasted. He said that she spoiled the business by coming into the store with the children undressed and dirty. With charges and countercharges being passed to and fro, each one gradually got heated up until finally a genuine quarrel was arrived at. He told her that she was lazy, that she had not made a supper in three years, and that she didn't take care of the house and children, that all she cared about was shows, candy, ice-cream, and that also she was always sick. He called her a natural-born hospital. He then explained to worker that he would wake up at three or four o'clock in the morning to take her to the hospital and as always the doctor would say there was nothing wrong. L strongly objected to everything he said and said that she was not to blame that she was sick and denied the fact that she never made his meals, complaining that although she cooked him good suppers he preferred eating in a restaurant. Moreover, he is very spiteful and although she gives him clean underwear he always takes care to have dirty underwear on when he goes to his mother's home to take a bath. Also, she can see no reason why if she is sick at night and the baby cries he cannot oblige her by getting up and making a bottle. Then L said that her husband hits her, that he has kicked and slapped her, and at this point J became so irate that he got up and left the room. Notwithstanding the heat of the argument, and the fact that each one told exactly what they thought of the other, it seemed to worker that nevertheless they were glad to be in the presence of one another.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 1031. The husband returned shortly after this conference, but they separated later and the wife secured a divorce about a year subsequently upon the grounds of cruelty.

A conference in the J case shows much the same situation. Mr. and Mrs. J had been married only a few months when they became known to the organization. It was not until two years later, however, that domestic discord was recognized, of which there are reports at intervals throughout the succeeding eleven years of contact. The chief accusations of the wife were that her husband abused her, did not support her properly, drank, and called her vile names. He accused her of nagging and improper discipline of the children. Mr. J at one time was committed to a hospital for the insane, but released after a few months there. The conference described was held during the later period of contact and the situation remained unchanged at the time the record was read:

There is a violent domestic difficulty between them and during worker's presence they quarreled continually. He tried to explain certain situations and justify himself and she did likewise. They both insisted that the best thing to do would be to separate but they ought to wait until Mr. J is back working. All their quarrels are small and petty, without rhyme or reason, but they both impressed worker as being so stupid that they cannot be reasoned with.<sup>1</sup>

The V case shows much the same picture, although the conference ended with what seemed to be certain constructive accomplishments. Mr. and Mrs. V became known to the organization due to an unemployment problem. There were four children at that time and they had been married eight years, marrying at the ages of twenty-three and thirteen respectively. They had sex relations prior to marriage. It was not until three years later that domestic discord was recognized, and Mrs. V complaining that her husband was lazy, drank, and did not support her. A conference was held three months later:

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 1487.



Mr. and Mrs. V in office as requested. Mrs. V had not been home the night before. Assistant supervisor and worker talked with them. Mr. and Mrs. V at first were very angry and screamed at each other. Mrs. V during the whole interview reprimanded Mr. V for his associations with Jessie, which he said were only of a friendly nature. He has no one here to take his part while Mrs. V had all her relatives to befriend her. He objects to her staying away from home at night, as he does not think it is becoming to a woman. Mrs. V called Mr. V a liar and he called her a woman of the streets. The two outstanding things in Mrs. V's mind were Jessie and lack of money for keeping up the necessary expenditures of the house. Mr. V had told her that a Mr. M had carried a story to him of someone making improper advances to Mrs. V. She asked Mr. V to have this corrected, as it was untrue. He said he would have Mr. M come to the office, also Jessie. Mr. and Mrs. V became calmer after a long interview. Mrs. V agreed to get his meals regularly for him. He said that he would be glad to take a regular job if he could get one. Mrs. V displayed her temper throughout the interview. She and Mr. V both stated that they cared for each other, but Mrs. V says that she has bad feelings toward him. Mr. V denied that he had threatened Mrs. V's life many times. Mr. and Mrs. V were quite calm when they left the office.<sup>1</sup>

While the nature of the conference technique, if it is to be successfully used, demands an attitude of objectivity toward each person, this is not always maintained. The following excerpt seems to indicate that the worker definitely took sides with the wife as against the husband.

Mr. and Mrs. Y had both been married previously. There were two children in the family belonging to the wife. Mr. and Mrs. Y had themselves been married only a few months when Mr. Y left and the situation became known to the organization. The conference was held for the purpose of effecting reconciliations:

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 2602. When the case was closed about a year later there had been little substantial change in the domestic discord situation.

Mr. and Mrs. Y in office. Mrs. Y denied all complaints made by her husband relative to personal uncleanness. He again repeated his story of having been insulted by her before friends but this was also denied by Mrs. Y. Apparently, he wished to put these forth as two of his strongest arguments. She asserted that her husband had no complaint to make regarding the children as she explained the entire situation to him before marriage and he had promised to take care of them. Mr. Y had no statement to make, and, in fact, refused to commit himself further than that he disliked his wife very intensely and had no thought of returning to her. He did not seem to have any idea of obligation toward her and stated that she could go to work as his other wife did. He himself is working steadily at present as an assistant plumber. Worker could not help but get the impression that Mr. Y is the type of man who was unwilling to make any necessary compromises so that domestic differences might be solved and would offer these as reasons for the present situation, thus trying to hide the possible real cause, namely, that he probably was tired of supporting his wife and two stepchildren, or did not think he had any more obligations toward them. His attitude was a very unfriendly one, he refused to discuss matter and was very short and snappy in his statements. He seemed to be very selfish and devoid of any friendly feelings whatsoever for Mrs. Y. He is a man of medium height, slender, and a rather unpleasant personality, one which unconsciously arouses antagonism.

Mrs. Y's attitude was entirely the reverse, and, as usual, her personal appearance indicated every possible care. She is earning her living by helping a friend of hers in a restaurant as her husband has given her no money since date of separation. It is very possible, too, that the present marriage could hardly have been a very harmonious one from another angle, namely, that Mrs. Y was always thinking of her first husband whom she loved dearly and might probably have been making comparisons. She asserted, however, that although Mr. S was in her thoughts she absolutely did not permit this to interfere with her relationships with Mr. Y. Worker recently was told that Mr. Y is working for Mr. W at ——— Ave. Mrs. Y is not pregnant.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 1255. Mr. Y returned home a few weeks after this conference. Upon his wife's request he left again three months later, and Mrs. Y started suit for divorce.

## THE "STAR CHAMBER" CONFERENCE

The "star chamber" conference is one in which others are invited in to take part in the discussion, not for the purpose of protecting each of the principals from undue advantage on the part of the other as do lawyers in a court, but for the purpose of making the conference more impressive and therefore the acceptance of its decisions on the part of husband and wife more obligatory. In the W case the persons taking part in the conference, besides the husband and wife, were: the supervisor, an assistant supervisor, the worker, and a minister.

Mr. and Mrs. W, who had been married for eleven years and had four children, were not living together at the time of first contact. Mr. W had left his family without support. Mrs. W said he was stingy. His retort was that she was immoral. The conference was called ten months later to effect a reconciliation.

During the two-hour conference, J [the youngest daughter, age 3] sat quietly on Mrs. W's lap, playing with some toys; she is a very attractive, well-mannered child, with light skin and very dark brown hair. Both Mr. and Mrs. W seemed very quiet and self-contained throughout the conference. When the discussion centered around Mrs. W's morals, Rev. B carefully put the question to Mr. W, "Do you acknowledge these four children as your own?" [Mr. W had previously denied the paternity of the oldest and youngest.] Mr. W calmly replied "I do!" Rev. B pointed out the responsibility of the two parents to maintain a proper home for the children, and stressed the importance of both father's and mother's care and endeavored to point out the dangers in the situation should Mrs. W try to take care of the children alone. Mr. W was willing for the reconciliation to take place, but Mrs. W remained obdurate. Rev. B suggested an outing for the entire family in Jackson Park, where the possibilities of a future reconciliation might prove more attractive. Both Mr. and Mrs. W accepted the suggestion and Rev. B provided the money for lunch for Mrs. W

and J and for the picnic in the park. Mr. W agreed to get the children who are with his sister and bring them back to office to meet Mrs. W and J for the outing.

Later, when Mr. W returned with the two boys and E they rushed up to J, hugged her and passed her to one another to be kissed and then greeted Mrs. W affectionately. The family departed for the outing—children very happy and gay—both Mr. and Mrs. W very quiet and thoughtful.<sup>1</sup>

#### THE PLAN AS A SOLUTION

One of the purposes of a conference is that of arriving at some sort of plan to which both husband and wife will agree. The plan is expected to govern future conduct in such a way as to prevent discord, or at least to prevent the recurrence of the situations which in the past have caused conflict.

The chief complaint in the B case was that Mrs. B did not give his three children by a former marriage the proper care. Both Mr. and Mrs. B had been married previously, but only Mr. B had children. They became known to the organization nine months after this second marriage. The worker tried to bring about an adjustment in the following manner:

Spoke at length to both Mr. and Mrs. B and suggested this plan—that they pay no attention to any neighborhood interference—that Mr. B should be examined at the T.B. clinic at the dispensary as soon as possible and that the home will be very carefully watched as to the care of the children and Mrs. B's conduct toward them. Both must have patience with one another—Mr. B to be lenient in his judgment of Mrs. B's ability in handling the children—that since she had no children of her own, she will be given all the opportunity in learning how to care properly for her three stepchildren—that the separation plan is to be held in abeyance for one month and the future plan will

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 2894. The case was closed two months later, unchanged, no reconciliation resulting from the outing.

be based on the result of this tentative plan—that the most important thing at present would be Mr. B's health—that the children will be examined in the contact clinic as soon as notified. Both Mr. and Mrs. B agreed to this suggestion. They were also advised that a budget would be devised and Mrs. B assisted in care of the household each week.

Mr. and Mrs. B left the office together after faithfully promising to adhere to this tentative plan. (It was interesting to note their reaction to the suggestion offered and how interested they both became when the health problem was discussed. It distracted them from their original complaints.)<sup>\*</sup>

The A case also reveals a plan worked out during the conference. Mr. and Mrs. A had been married six years and had two children. Mrs. A complained that her husband did not support her properly, drank, and gambled. Mr. A replied that his wife was lazy, did not keep the house clean, that her mother, who lived with them, constantly interfered, and that his wife refused to have sexual relations with him. The worker first interviewed husband and wife together, then each separately, and then:

Again interviewed Mr. and Mrs. A together. The following things were decided:

1. That two evenings a week, Mr. A is to stay at home with his family as he can very well arrange to complete his business transactions five nights a week [Mr. A sold life insurance].

2. Mr. A is to refrain from gambling.

3. Mrs. A is to prepare his meals daily.

4. Mr. A is to give his wife \$35 a week. Out of this sum, Mrs. A is to meet the rent. Clothing for themselves and the children is to be provided by extra money which Mr. A will give his wife every three or four weeks if business warrants it. Mrs. H [the wife's mother] is to stay with them until such time as Mr. A will be able to make more in order to meet the full rent of \$65 monthly. There is to be no quarreling

<sup>\*</sup> Case No. 1617. Contact continued for some time, but without substantial change in the conflict situation.

over Mrs. H since Mr. A of his own accord had suggested that the mother-in-law be with them.

5. Should situation in the home again become aggravated, another conference will be held.<sup>1</sup>

Plans, however, need not be formulated during a conference between husband and wife. They may, instead, be worked out more leisurely. In fact the present trend in family case-work is to do so. According to this point of view, it is the task of the worker to work out a plan in each case after she has had opportunity to make a diagnosis. Such a plan may be said to correspond to the prescription in medicine, and though utilized from the beginning of case-work, it has not always been recorded in the record. Ordinarily, in fact, one has had to infer the plan from the record of what was done.

One of the organizations studied has adopted the scheme of incorporating a diagnosis and plan sheet as an essential part of the record of cases. It is, therefore, possible to survey the plans in domestic discord cases. Accordingly, in all current cases read for this study, record was made of the data upon these sheets. The following results are taken from all cases current as domestic discord cases which had previously been current, and showing the same problem, in 1925, provided there were plan sheets attached.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 1430. Contact continued for two years more, during which time Mr. A left the home twice but returned each time. He had just recently returned when the case was closed. He was working regularly and Mrs. A hoped that he would be more reliable now although she said he was of a "happy-go-lucky nature."

<sup>2</sup> As this scheme had just been introduced plan sheets were not found on all the current cases read. The reader is especially cautioned not to take the frequency with which each plan appears in this table as showing what might be found in a larger group of cases. These data are presented primarily to show the nature and range of plans, rather than the relative frequency with which each occurs.

Plan	No. of Instances
No reference to domestic discord in plan.....	16
Arrange for, or obtain increase in, weekly allowance from husband	5
Attempt to locate and return husband.....	4
Take action to force support (inc. court action).....	3
Arrange conference with husband and wife. ....	2
Interview husband.....	2
Birth-control instruction.....	2
Attempt to gain co-operation of husband and wife in solving domestic discord.....	2
Investigate wife's questionable behavior.....	1
Interest wife in cooking class.....	1
See wife to get present situation.....	1
Arrange for husband to receive sex instruction.....	1
Try to make husband understand wife's condition.....	1
English classes for:	
Husband.....	1
Wife.....	1
Plan to increase earnings of man.....	1
See husband frequently as he needs supervision.....	1

Or taking the diagnoses irrespective of whether or not they occur singly or two or more together and showing the frequency of occurrence of each plan one gets the following results:<sup>1</sup>

#### Desertion of husband

Attempt to locate and return.....	4
No plan.....	3

#### Separation of husband and wife

Get increased allowance from husband.....	3
Interview husband.....	1
Get present situation.....	1
No plan.....	9

<sup>1</sup> Again the reader is cautioned against taking the frequencies given here too literally. The classification used is not entirely that set up by the agency, but represents an adaptation as revealed by the data entered upon the plan sheets by workers.

Non-support of husband	
Arrange support . . . . .	6
No plan . . . . .	4
Incompatibility of husband and wife due to	
<i>a)</i> Divergent standards and habits	
Interview husband . . . . .	1
Get co-operation of husband and wife . . . . .	1
No plan . . . . .	5
<i>b)</i> Poor housekeeping	
Cooking classes . . . . .	1
<i>c)</i> Low earning capacity of husband	
Plan to increase earnings of husband . . . . .	1
<i>d)</i> Racial differences	
English class for husband . . . . .	1
<i>e)</i> Difference in degree of Americanization	
Classes for wife . . . . .	1
Sexual incompatibility	
Arrange conference . . . . .	2
Sex instruction . . . . .	1
See husband frequently, needs supervision . . . . .	1
Birth-control instruction . . . . .	1
Make husband understand wife's condition . . . . .	1
No plan . . . . .	6
Husband and wife quarrel constantly	
Investigate wife's questionable behavior . . . . .	1

Plans, accordingly, seem to belong to three types: (*a*) motor manipulation, (*b*) re-education, and (*c*) the aspiration plan. The motor manipulation plan is directed toward the solution of immediate, practical problems, such as locating a deserted husband, taking court action to enforce support, arranging conferences, interviewing, etc. Re-education plans usually go little farther than arranging cooking classes for the wife, vocational instruction for the husband, English classes for either husband or wife, and birth-control instruction for both. Aspiration plans, on the other hand, define



the objective, but indicate little as to how it may be realized. Such plans already mentioned are: "get co-operation of husband and wife in solving domestic discord," "plan to increase earnings of husband," and "try to make husband understand wife's condition."<sup>1</sup>

These data seem to indicate a tendency for plans to become stereotyped and for them to be much more simple than a conception of multiple causation would allow. In fact, disregarding the segmental character of the plans themselves, there are in the sample of 44 cases only 45 plan elements having reference to the domestic discord problem as compared with 136 referring to other problems in these same cases, a ratio of 1:3. Yet it may be suggested that if some adjustment could be made in the conflict between husband and wife there would be little further need for the case-worker to concern herself with many of the other problems for they would take care of themselves in time.

#### STEPS IN TREATMENT

It may be objected that plans formulated in the process of treatment are superior to any projected plans. Thus it might be argued that for administrative purposes only a meager outline of a plan is necessary. In fact one might go even farther and assert that to define one's plan in too great detail in advance would be likely to defeat one's purpose, because the carrying out of the plan depended to a large degree upon the exigencies of the situation, which, of course, are always changing. According to this point of view, descriptions of treatment already accomplished give a much

<sup>1</sup> Classifying the plans in 28 cases (there were no plans referring to the domestic discord situation in the remaining 16 out of the 44 cases) one obtains the following: Motor manipulation, 19; re-education, 6; aspiration, 4.

truer picture of case-work in domestic discord cases than can any group of projected plans.

The following cases, while unsuccessful in outcome, show a greater concentration of effort than is found in what may be called the average case. The excerpts were taken from supplementary reports not ordinarily a part of case-records. Since the appropriateness of the elements of treatment is not the point of issue, the descriptions will be presented without attention to the diagnostic setting:

#### TREATMENT

Repeated visits to relatives to gain their confidence and help.  
Referred to self-support department for help in business.  
Verified divorce and established legality of marriage.  
Established fact that Mr. S is physically O.K.  
Referred him to night school to learn to read and write.  
Suggested he join some fraternal organization (not carried out).  
Suggested separation of business from home (not carried out).  
Mrs. S referred to cooking class.  
This followed to be sure she carried into the home what she gained in class.  
Repeated treatment interview with man.  
Repeated treatment interview with woman.  
Repeated treatment interview with man and woman together.  
Couple's plan for separation brought out in these interviews constantly opposed by worker.  
Mrs. S told that if she separated from husband financial assistance would not be considered.

This treatment was carried on for a period of over three years. At no time was the worker able to change the attitude of the relatives. They insisted on separation and could see no other solution of the problem. The separation of the home from business was never carried out as the income was not sufficient to allow the family to pay double rent. Mr. S took the suggestion that he enrol at night school, but whether or not he continued his studies is not mentioned in the record. Mrs. S was a regular and enthusiastic member of the cooking class.

She carried her knowledge of preparing dishes into the home and there was evidence of an improvement in that direction. In spite of the treatment given, both Mr. and Mrs. S harped upon separation. They were told on various occasions that the organization would under no circumstances give any financial assistance. As they lived apart for a few months during the process of treatment, and Mrs. S was not able to get along on money her husband sent her, this arrangement seemed impossible and Mrs. S did not want to enter into it again without some assurance of outside assistance. There were periods when there seemed to be more harmony in the home, but these never lasted for any length of time. Today the situation is identical to what it was when our assistance was first asked. Neither have a solution to offer other than a complete separation.<sup>1</sup>

The second excerpt gives more insight into the mechanisms utilized in attempting to get husband and wife to carry out the program formulated by the case-worker:

#### TREATMENT

##### A. MEDICAL

Mrs. D has consented to a general physical examination and possible treatment for the goiter, even though she stated that she is almost unconscious of this condition. She is sure it does not make her nervous. Nor does it influence her irritability in the home. However, she will submit to medication in hope that her general well-being may be improved. She will also have special care given L [a son] after recommendations are received regarding his condition. It is hoped that the other children may also receive a routine examination.

##### B. ECONOMIC

It was also agreed between Mr. D, Mrs. D, and worker that it will be satisfactory if Mrs. D would keep a budget of her expenses in order

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 1635. Contact with case, four years. Married for eleven years at time of first contact. Husband been married before and divorced. Three children; last born five years previously. Accusations of wife: gambling, laziness, and abuse; of husband: interference on part of wife's family, evil associates, hot temper, and refusal to have sex relations. Diagnosis: sexual incompatibility and incompatibility due to gambling and laziness of husband.

that her budget may be examined, and Mr. D promised that he would allow his wife \$30 a week and make this payment regularly. On the basis of Mrs. D's report of her expenditures, recommendations were made to Mr. D regarding the immediate need of clothing for the children as the \$30 which he allowed her did not suffice to take care of this item. Mr. D has responded by buying shoes for the family and other necessary clothing in addition to his allowance. Mrs. D has been interested in the cooking class and will attend the meetings at the \_\_\_\_\_ hereafter. It is hoped that she will have a double benefit from this, the gain of knowledge of preparing and serving food for her family, and the social aspect.

#### C. SOCIAL

1. Mrs. D is urged to resume her interest in her club.
2. It was suggested to Mrs. D that she try to improve her appearance and make the most of her social opportunities in order that she may encourage her husband to make more of himself, as he seems to be proud of the fact that he is a "self-made" man. It was pointed out to her that she must be the leader, even though she remains in the background, as she has the advantage over her husband, both in education and social background.

#### D. EDUCATIONAL

An effort is being made to interest Mr. D in continuing the education of his children, but before discussing his children's future with him, we hope for a more auspicious opportunity than has been furnished this far, when we may get from him a fuller expression of his aims for the children. At that time we may also be able to broach the subject of education in sex hygiene for himself and his wife and we hope then to be able to suggest that the adolescent boys are in need of information and recreation suitable to their particular ages.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 1232. Contact with case, two years. Married thirteen years at time of first contact. Five children: four boys and one girl. Parents separated for a month during latter part of period of contact. Wife complains that husband is abusive, hot-tempered, gambles, and is stingy. Husband replies that wife is extravagant, and refuses to have sex relations with him. He refuses to co-operate with the organization and does not want any outside interference. Case current, and situation unchanged when record was read.

## NATURE OF TREATMENT IN CASE-WORK

In general, it may be said, then, that treatment in case-work of the problem of domestic discord is by a trial-and-error process. If the plans are formulated they tend to be restricted to suggestions of immediate overt action of some sort, looking toward motor manipulation of the persons involved, or else they simply state objectives with little to indicate how these may be realized. Accordingly, treatment is directed toward the immediate adjustment of concrete points of conflict with little attention given to the underlying processes.

Treatment interviews, on the whole, are entered into with little more than the objective defined, at best, but with little or no forethought as to how the immediate objective is to be realized. The case-worker, then, proceeds by a trial-and-error process to discover what appeals will accomplish the results, trying out first one and then another, until either the whole gamut has been run or else an appeal is found to serve the purpose. The most common techniques are what have been called the "ordering-and-forbidding" and the persuasion, of which there are varying forms.<sup>1</sup>

The most characteristic mode of approach seems to be illustrated in what has been called the conference technique of treatment. This approach defines certain assumptions in

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 1246 shows the process of selection of appeal in the interview. "Worker tried to point out to him that a man of high character does not put all emphasis on the physical side of married life. . . . Worker tried to reason with him from various angles, but nothing affected him. He is not afraid of court action and is willing to go to jail rather than re-establish a home with his wife. Worker attempted to appeal to his protective feeling toward his wife, but he again assured worker that he is doing more for her than he should as the law only tells him to give her \$10 and he is giving her \$15 a week. Worker questioned whether his religion sanctioned such action and Mr. R stated that he is not religious. As for his duty toward his son, Mr. R does not recog-

the philosophy of case-work which might be overlooked if attention were restricted to interviews with husband and wife separately. First, one may point out the assumption that husband and wife know what the conflict is all about. Second, that with a few suggestions from the case-worker they can arrive at a solution of their difficulties. Third, that an adjustment can be accomplished immediately, an act of will being the chief requisite. Fourth, that the process of adjustment is a rational one. Fifth, that the truth can be arrived at by checking the reports, one against the other, in each other's presence and that to arrive at the truth is a paramount part of the process. Sixth, that persons generally quarrel about unimportant details, though fundamentally in agreement in the more fundamental aspects of domestic relations. And seventh, that only organic difficulties are fundamental in preventing adjustment.

It should be apparent that husband and wife do not know why it is that they cannot get along together without conflict. If they did know they would not, in all probability, come to the case-worker. Yet nothing lingers on in case-work so tenaciously as does the intellectualistic psychology which assumes that human beings behave purely from rational impulses. According to this point of view,<sup>1</sup> if one wishes to know why a person behaves in a particular way

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nize the responsibility. . . . Only two arguments seemed to touch him deeply. Upon questioning, he advised that his son is named after his father, who died when he was only three months old. When worker asked, had his father lived, if he would be proud of such action, Mr. R made no answer and hung his head. Worker further gathered that because he was fatherless, he had a very hard struggle through life, and therefore called his attention to the similar condition in which he was leaving his son, who is not three months old."

<sup>1</sup> In case No. 1175, for example, the worker eliminated the sex factor in this fashion: "Spoke to Mr. and Mrs. S about their marital relations, and they stated that there was no sex incompatibility."

ask him for an explanation. He may refuse to explain, or he may substitute a false explanation in order to deceive one, but he can give the "true" explanation if he but wants to. The task of the case-worker, then, is to approach the person in such a way as to get the "true" explanation.

Modern developments in social psychology, however, indicate that human beings generally act first and reflect afterward. Reflection, therefore, assumes the form of rationalizations; that is, pseudo-logical reasons to square one's behavior with the demands of the group as reflected in one's conscience. But even when action follows conscious reflection, the motivating elements given by the person are of little direct value because of their subjective character. Scientific control depends upon objective determination of the conditioning events in a sequence, and the description of the mechanism by which these events or factors are transformed into what follows as a consequence.

This same intellectualistic philosophy is carried over into the assumption that a few suggestions from the case-worker will solve the difficulty. The nature of the treatment plans in the beginning of this chapter show this assumption. Yet the fact remains that such solutions usually take on the character of a magical manipulation of the environment which is in no way related to the genesis of discord. This assumption is apparent in cases in which the activities of the case-worker go only so far as enforcing a financial responsibility, but refusing to make any attempt to bring about an adjustment in other phases of family relations.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In case No. 1211, for example, one finds this entry: "Telephone Mr. H [husband's lawyer]. . . . Advised Mr. H that worker would call him at 11:30, that is, the time he said Mr. W would return, for information as to what Mr. W's intentions were, that Mr. W has been given every opportunity to make good and has failed to take advantage. If Mr. W persisted in de-

The assumption that an adjustment can be accomplished immediately by an act of will through the medium of a rational analysis is apparent in the average attempt on the part of the worker to act as arbitrator. The B case illustrates these assumptions quite aptly:

Found both Mr. and Mrs. B at home. Mrs. B bitterly stated that her husband was extremely cruel and miserly and that it had become almost an impossibility to live in the same house with him. . . . Mrs. B was inclined to blame most of her troubles on the interference of her mother-in-law (who lives with them) although she stated that when she and her husband quarreled, Mrs. B, Sr., usually maintained an impartial attitude. However, she complains bitterly that all her husband's property is in his mother's name.

Mrs. B advised that Mr. B and his mother are a great deal closer than sons and mothers usually are and that instead of confiding in his wife or seeking her opinion or telling her anything at all about the business, he usually seeks his mother. She resents this very bitterly as she feels that her husband should consider her more than as merely a child. . . .

Mrs. B advised that . . . on one occasion, she had made some lunch for herself and the two children. . . . When Mr. B came into the home, upon seeing the table set for them, he started raving against her extravagance, cursing her until she fainted and a doctor had to be called to revive her. . . .

Mr. B listened to her talk with a rather tolerant smile and when asked whether he had anything to say for himself, advised at first that he had not and then later stated that his wife wanted for nothing

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liberately shirking his responsibility toward his family, —— [the agency] would be obliged to take some sort of action.

"Met Mrs. W at Mr. H's office, where worker also found Mr. W. Mr. H then advised worker that he had asked Mrs. W to come to the office for the purpose of effecting a reconciliation. Advised Mr. H that if this had been the purpose, it had been absolutely unnecessary for the worker to be present inasmuch as this organization was taking absolutely no stand in the matter of a reconciliation, as it felt that Mr. and Mrs. W were sufficiently intelligent and of sufficient age to know whether or not they wished to live together again."



and that she was relating imaginary ills. [A tour of the kitchen followed, conducted by Mr. B.]

It was impossible to get any degree of intelligent co-operation from either Mr. or Mrs. B, as all they would do was to contradict statements made by the other, and finally both lost their tempers and began to yell at each other.

Questioned Mrs. B whether she wished to continue to live with her husband and both he and she explained that it had never occurred to either one of them to separate or get a divorce. Advised them that if they planned to live together, they would certainly have to meet on some common basis in order to avoid such scenes in the future. Mr. B stated that his wife had a very quick temper and this was the cause of the trouble, while she insisted that Mr. B was extremely miserly and this caused the trouble between them.

Advised them that there was absolutely nothing that worker could do under the present circumstances, that they would have to decide for themselves whether they would live together peacefully or to separate, since it was bad for both of them, and for the children particularly, to have the constant quarreling in the home.<sup>1</sup>

One of the chief objectives in getting both husband and wife in for an interview together is to arrive at the "truth" of the matter. Unfortunately, what usually happens is to precipitate a quarrel in the worker's presence which later acts as a further barrier to adjustment. But whether the attempt to check up be with the two together or with each singly, it requires the repeating of the story told by one to the other. The worker is, thus, placed in a position similar to that of a relative or neighbor, who, by telling one person what the other has said, is regarded as a gossip. Placed in this rôle, the worker tends to lose the confidence of both,

<sup>1</sup> Case No. 1105. Husband and wife had both been married previously. Each had two children by former marriages. They had been married a year when they came to the attention of the agency and there was a child three months old. Five months later the wife had her husband arrested and sentenced to jail. She was granted a decree of separate maintenance a month later.

unless she definitely takes sides with one as against the other. The result, in any case, tends to be the loss of prestige for the worker and so to render her incapable of effective treatment.

There is a tendency on the part of the case-worker to assume that if the husband is supporting his family and not abusing them, does not gamble and works regularly and does not drink, and if his wife takes proper care of the home, and there is still conflict, then the discord must be trivial. This assumption obviously indicates a failure on the part of case-workers to recognize the symbolical character of many of the quarrels between husband and wife. It is not unusual for workers to conclude that if there are no quarrels about sex relations, then the sex factor is unimportant.<sup>1</sup>

Many case-workers are unable to get at conflict in sex relations for two reasons: their knowledge of sex is ordinarily limited, and the fact that they are unmarried causes many clients to feel reticent in discussing the matter of sex relations.

Workers often take the position that the matter of sex relations is too intimate to be gone into. And even where this extreme position is not taken, the hesitating and apologetic attitude on the part of the worker does not invite confidence. The result is, that even where any account is had of the sex conflict, it tends to be superficial, where if it had

<sup>1</sup> Case 1472, for example, shows this attitude: Mr. Y again made the charge that his wife refuses to cohabit with him. She denies this, but says that when he has been abusive to her, or when he is extremely dirty and gets into bed with his soiled clothes, she does refuse to sleep in the same room. Neither Mr. nor Mrs. Y gave the impression of being very frank about this matter, and Mr. Y seemed to be exaggerating a point which was not particularly important to him as their real quarrels do not seem to be on this point."

been inquired into in a matter-of-fact way, with some show of understanding, there would be little or no hesitation on the part of the average person going to a case-work agency.

As to the assumption that organic difficulties are the only significant ones, one needs only to point out that the marriage relationship is not simply a physiological relationship. Organic defects, therefore, are significant only as the attitudes toward such deficiencies on the part of the persons themselves are such as to cause conflict. But such attitudes become defined in social experience—there being no inevitable attitude correlated with each organic defect. The organic defect is, thus, not the causal element in the domestic discord, but one of the elements producing the attitude which causes conflict. The same defect defined in another social setting could easily facilitate accord rather than discord. Ill health on the part of the wife, for example, may either cause the husband to be irritable and so lead to domestic discord, or it may make him more solicitous for the welfare of the wife and so promote harmonious relations.

All this amounts to saying that the case-work approach to treatment of domestic discord proceeds upon certain erroneous assumptions regarding the nature of the problem. These assumptions are fallacious chiefly in oversimplifying the situation and so seeming to call for a rather simple technique of treatment. When one realizes the relative complexity of domestic discord—the way in which factors are organically linked with other factors—a more complicated and involved technique of treatment seems logically to be expected.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE SOCIOLOGICAL TREATMENT OF DOMESTIC DISCORD

Case-work, as has been pointed out, is segmental in its approach to the treatment of domestic discord. Emphasis is placed upon the immediate situation with particular attention to the economic. Diagnosis is chiefly in terms of overt behavior and often couched in moralistic terminology. Little or no attempt is made to get at the genesis of the discord. Treatment is didactic, tending toward the dictatorial.

A more fundamental approach to treatment requires a higher degree of objectivity growing out of an analysis having some organic continuity. Such an analysis must take into account every element of the individual's experience which is related in any way to the domestic discord, whether past or present. It must include, then, an objective account of covert, incipient, and overt behavior so far as such behavior is related to the relations between husband and wife.<sup>1</sup> Upon the basis of these data the case may be summarized in more general terms and treated accordingly. Such treatment for the present, at least, takes the form chiefly of a verbalized control of the environment rather than a motor manipulation of the individual and his environment.

<sup>1</sup> In practice, of course, the social therapist cannot go into the life-history of each of the two persons in all its details. He must select out the most outstanding features of the genetic background, his choice of materials being governed by what is needed to bring about an adjustment. Here, again, arises the distinction between diagnosis and analysis. A complete diagnosis is that which is necessary for effective treatment at the moment. Analysis is never complete, though it may be discontinued for the time being for practical reasons.

An approach meeting the requirements outlined in the preceding paragraph has been worked out by Harriet R. Mowrer in an experiment referred to in chapter vi. (See p. 68.) During the period of one year in which this experiment was being carried on, twenty cases were treated of which 60 per cent at the close of the experiment ended in adjustment as defined in chapter viii in contrast to 6 per cent for the same organization in 1925.<sup>1</sup> (See pp. 104-6.) This approach may be illustrated by the Hillman case.

### THE HILLMAN CASE<sup>2</sup>

The situation in terms of overt behavior as viewed by any casual observer, neighbor, relative, or friend, may be described as follows:<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is obvious, of course, that since twenty cases constitute a relatively small group in contrast to the larger group with which comparison is made these results may show some bias. Yet, while these twenty cases represent a selected group, they were chosen chiefly because of their relatively long period of unsuccessful contact or because they were thought to be difficult.

<sup>2</sup> Harriet R. Mowrer, "Analysis and Treatment of the Hillman Case" (manuscript).

<sup>3</sup> Previous contacts covering a period of four months are described in the record as follows:

"Mrs. H in office complaining of domestic difficulty with her husband.

"Read Home Finding record. Learned that the family was referred to them 3-18-26 by Disp. Mrs. H is psycho-neurotic and was sent to hospital for observation. Mr. H is part owner of an automobile accessory shop and his earnings are \$35 a week. Mr. H refused placement by Home Finding. Later Rex was admitted to a Day and Night Nursery.

"Mrs. H telephoned and asked that worker call at her home to see her regarding domestic difficulty with her husband. He neglects her and the children and does not support her adequately. Mr. H is in business on W. Van Buren Street, and Mrs. H is not able to come to the office as she gave birth to a baby girl at hospital two weeks ago.

"Visited. The house was neatly furnished and very immaculate. Mrs. H was dressed very well and she appeared quite intelligent and sincere. She stated since she has been back from the hospital, for the past five weeks, she has received no support from Mr. H except that he has paid the rent, gas and electric bills. She has managed to get along, however, on the sum of \$150

Couple have been married six years. Two children, a boy age five and a girl age one year. A woman, age thirty-one, who refuses to play the rôle of a wife and mother because of heart trouble; diagnosed by a mental hygiene clinic as a case of "psychoneurosis" with a medical diagnosis of "slight mitro-lesion of the heart, with full compensation

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which she took from Mr. H just before she went to the hospital. This \$150 was money which Mr. H had taken in for 3 days' sales July 3rd, July 4th, and 5th and because of the holiday he was not able to deposit the money in the bank. He left the money in the house and Mrs. H stated that since he failed to give her money for a private doctor for her confinement and since she did not want to go to the hospital as a free patient, she kept this money for herself and did not tell her husband she was doing this, because she felt that the money was due her. Mr. H became angry when he found that she had put the money away for her own use in the Western Trust and Savings Bank and told her he would give her no money until he was ready to do this, and that she should keep an itemized record of the money she spends. However, the money is all used up now as since she returned from the hospital she had not been able to do any heavy work and had to keep a maid for \$18 a week. Now she had a colored girl and pays her \$12 a week. Mrs. H further stated that she has also had to borrow money to meet her expenses as Mr. H would not listen to her at all. Mr. H has always made a nice living but for the past 3 or 4 years, since she has been ill having cardiac trouble, Mr. H has gradually become indifferent and antagonistic toward her. She stated that he comes home late at night and sleeps by himself and is fond of the oldest child. He seldom goes near the baby. His attitude has hurt her and she has become very sensitive because she feels that he no longer likes her. She is very much upset over the fact that he does not sympathize with her and yet he knows that she is ill. She stated that even last year she went to ——— and showed worker a letter which she received from there. It was dated 3-30-25 and was signed by Dr. Williams. The diagnosis made was cardiac neurosis but the prognosis was good and the recommendation made was that Mrs. H live a normal life. Her number in ——— was A. 4997.

"Mr. H is in the tire business for himself on 649 W. Van Buren Street, and goes under the name of the Western Tire Co. He also has two men working for him. He does well and has a checking account at the Merchants Trust and Savings Bank. He has been in business in this store for the past three years. He formerly was on Michigan near 12th with a partner. The partnership was broken because he could not get along with his partner.

"Mrs. H was born in Berlin and was one of 6 children. Her father was a teacher. They owned their own home. When she was twelve years old she

present." A wife, thus, who assumes the rôle of a semi-invalid, insisting that she is too sick to conduct her household and who must, therefore, have the services of a colored maid. She has consulted leading specialists of Chicago and R——. She thinks of her husband as "abusive because he has a good business and yet refuses to pay further

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was sent to a private dressmaking establishment in order to learn the trade. For the first half year she was not paid while learning but was paid the second half year. After she learned the trade she went to various tailor shops and would earn from \$9 to \$10 a month. Two of her sisters were also dressmakers. Mrs. Stock, her oldest sister, who first come to America, sent for Mrs. H to come here. When she arrived she worked in various tailor shops. She has worked for Lowenthal and Gray on Market St. for about three or four years. She said this shop is no longer in existence. She has also worked at other places but did not remember the names.

"Mrs. H, before she was married, always stayed with Mrs. Stock. However, when Mrs. Stock took ill, Mrs. H went to live with Mrs. Silverman, Mr. H's sister. It was through Mrs. Silverman that Mrs. H met her husband and they went together about three years. However, during this time they became engaged once and then broke the engagement. Mrs. H said that Mr. H pleaded with her to marry him and although she refused, her friends and his friends told her that he was a very fine man and would make a fine husband for her.

"Mrs. H said that when she first came to this country she went to school with Mrs. Silverman's niece at night and learned to speak English.

"Mrs. H stated that when she was single she worked hard but earned good money. She managed to save \$1,000 before she married Mr. H but after they were married he inveigled the money out of her as well as an insurance policy. Mrs. H has never forgiven him for doing all of this and it was for this reason that she felt that the \$150 which she kept for herself was due her. Mrs. H said that her husband is coarse and common. That while he makes a good appearance he is quite deceiving to an outsider. He is very mean to her and is not educated. When she was in the hospital he never came to see her. Although she attends the Disp. he cannot be convinced that she is ill. Mrs. H stated that Rex was a patient at the Disp., as he has bowel trouble.

"Called at 649 W. Van Buren St., and talked with Mr. H at some length. He stated that he has become disgusted with his wife because for the past 3 or 4 years she has continually complained about her heart, stating that she has leakage of the heart. He stated that she is really not ill and that her complaints are merely mental ones. He has taken her to various doctors, Dr. Slager, Dr. Race, Dr. Rice, and Dr. Hammond, who have all told her

doctor bills." A husband, age thirty-six, who thinks of his wife as "lazy and hopeless" because she does not do her housework and complains constantly. A sister who thinks of the wife as a "sick woman with heart trouble" and who regards herself, too, as a "heart case" and her brother-in-law as "mean" because he does not conduct himself "in the way a good husband should toward a sick wife."

Certain more thoroughgoing data, however, once obtained, de-

there is nothing seriously ill with her. Mrs. H, however, has lost confidence in each doctor because he has told her this. Mr. H refuses to sympathize with her and disregards her illness entirely. He says that he has spent too much money on private doctors who have done nothing for her and he even gave her \$300 currency with which to go to R—— to find out definitely if she is ill and how serious her illness is. Since the diagnosis made in R—— was cardiac neurosis, and since the prognosis was good, Mr. H felt that he cannot afford to spend any more money for private doctors. For this reason he says that if she feels she has to receive medical assistance, that she can go to the dispensary.

"Mr. H also stated that he has given Mrs. H \$20 every week. Before confinement she nagged him for money with which to go to a private doctor, and although he told her that he would not take care of her, he saw no reason why she should have taken the \$500 and she has two envelopes. He said this deed of hers has made him very antagonistic toward her now, and he can never forgive her for doing this as his credit is good and this money made him short in the bank. He had to postpone payment of bills until he made up this deposit. He said that since she cannot understand what his business means to him and since she might have known that this money was important that it be deposited in the bank, Mr. H feels that she no longer cares about him except only to care about getting money, as much money out of him as possible. He said that on this date he gave her \$15 in the morning and expects her to account for every penny of the \$150 she spent.

"He said that he did not inveigle any insurance policy out of her and showed worker receipts for the premiums which he paid on them. There is one insurance policy in the N.Y. Life for \$1,000 for Mrs. H and there is a joint policy for Mr. and Mrs. H for \$2,000. The premium on each policy is \$49.14 a year. Mr. H also has a \$1,000 life-policy in the Missouri State Life Co., which expires in December. Mr. H further stated that regarding the money that Mrs. H had when he first married her, he did not inveigle any of this from her either. When he bought his furniture he asked her for \$100 but said that he has given this back to her and much more.

"Mr. H stated that he no longer loves Mrs. H as he did when they were



fined the situation in other terms than "abusive," "mean," "stingy," "lazy," and furnished a more plausible explanation of why Mrs. H insisted upon being sick. The data secured, the analysis of the data, and the treatment follow.

11-22-26 visited Mrs. H } and secured the following information:  
11-24-26 visited Mr. H }

#### ENVIRONMENT PRIOR TO MARRIAGE

Mr. and Mrs. H both lived in Lawndale prior to marriage, in the neighborhood of 1400 S. Central Park.

#### FAMILY ORGANIZATION

Mrs. H is the youngest of a family of six girls. Three sisters are living in New York, two of whom are married. Another sister remained in Berlin. The oldest sister is living in Chicago and it was through her that Mrs. H came to this country. The father was a

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first married, and regrets having married her at all. He said that they broke their engagement during their courtship and it was her friends who encouraged him to go with her again. Mr. H told worker that he is perfectly willing to co-operate and to determine if Mrs. H is really ill. If she is, then he will change his attitude toward her. He said he is perfectly willing that worker arrange an interview with both him and Mrs. H.

"Later: visited Mrs. H. Worker questioned her about the money she took from her husband and Mrs. H showed worker only one envelope marked \$150. She said there was not \$500 in the house, but only \$150 which was all in this one envelope. She stated that she knew she should not have taken the money without telling him first but she was so excited at the time and was so angry with him because he refused to let her go to a private doctor, that she took the money. She further stated he gave her only \$12 a week support and not \$20 and said that she has checks which he gave her to prove this.

"Mrs. H was also willing that an interview be arranged with worker, herself and husband and that she is perfectly willing to co-operate.

"Dispensary worker in office. Discussed the situation with her. She stated that as far as Rex is concerned, there is no need for further medical social follow-up. Mrs. H goes from one clinic to another and is at present being observed in the Cardiac Clinic, where the finding shows no organic lesions. Dispensary was ready to refer the domestic situation to Family Service. They will close their contact and send this organization a detailed letter of their contact."

teacher. Her parents always got along very well together. She expressed the wish that "she could be happy like her parents and have as good a husband as her father." The type of family organization represented in her family was paternal. "My father always treated my mother well—never hollered at her." She has had little contact with her sisters in this country except with Mrs. Stock, who lives in Chicago. Her sisters "all have good husbands and no trouble like she has."

Mr. H came to the United States in 1913. He grew up in the same town in Germany as his wife. He did not know her there but had heard of her family. His father was a tailor. His mother died 21 years ago leaving three children. A year or two later his father remarried. There were two children by the second marriage. Mr. H was the only boy in the family. One of his sisters is living in Paris; another in Wisconsin. The two stepsisters are living in Lawndale. The family never got along together. One sister who lives on Millard Avenue has not seen him for twelve years and would not know him if they met. He sees his other sister occasionally, but there was a period of five years when they did not speak. Mr. H regards them as "hard to get along with"; (that is, the basis of the difficulty was the division of the father's property which was left to the unmarried children. It happened that Mr. H and his two sisters were single and inherited the property while the stepsisters, being married, received none of the inheritance). His parents got along fairly well together but the children "never could agree, the two groups being balanced against each other."

#### CULTURAL PATTERNS

Mrs. H's father was a teacher. She was taught by her father but had little formal education. Before her marriage she worked as a dressmaker earning \$40 a week. She occasionally went to the opera and to a dance. Her interest in going to the opera was not in the music but in "going somewhere." She had many friends—that is, she recalls three girl friends with whom she worked in the shops.

Mr. H was the son of a tailor. His father owned his own home. With his inheritance Mr. H came to the United States. He had practically no formal education. He has "picked up some by reading" (mostly newspapers). He never had many friends but "kept to him-

self." He does not recall the names of any friends he ever had. He never cared about social affairs but "preferred to keep to himself and get somewhere."

SOCIAL INTERACTION—FACTORS IN ADJUSTMENT AND CONFLICT  
BETWEEN FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

1. *Economic*

Mr. H makes a living by conducting an automobile accessory shop. He sometimes takes in \$400 a day. His expenses are high, having two men working for him. He has had his present business since 1923. Prior to that he went bankrupt in the same business on two different occasions. At the time of his marriage he was a decorator. He is anxious to "get ahead" and often works until 10 o'clock at night. He feels that he has given up "everything for work" (that is, "he never goes out like some people do").

Mrs. H has not worked since her marriage. She was "tired to death of work when she married." At the time she had \$1,000 saved. In referring to their present economic status she says, "We haven't always had so much" (that is, "my husband did not have a business").

2. *Cultural Factors*

Neither Mr. nor Mrs. H belong to any clubs. Her sister-in-law, however, belongs to a woman's club, "which she would like to attend if she weren't sick." (The women play cards and have a good time.) "Even if she weren't sick, she hasn't a nice coat to wear." The family only attend religious services on holidays.

3. *Health*

Mrs. H has been to numerous doctors, all of whom are specialists, but complains that "none of them are any good" (that is, they do not think she is sick).

Mr. H objects to Mrs. H's going to any doctor now as he feels that he has given her advantage of the best medical care. He complains that her search now is for "some doctor to tell her that she is sick."

4. *Pattern of Life*

Mr. H accepts his life-organization as it is. He has the idea that "one has to work for what he gets, but should be satisfied." He talks with very little inflection of his voice, and shows little emotion.

Mrs. H has a neurotic pattern of life, that is, her adjustment to her environment comes in the form of sickness. ("I am unable to go to the club and keep my friends because of sickness.")

#### FACTORS IN ADJUSTMENT AND CONFLICT WITHIN FAMILY GROUP

##### 1. *Economic*

Mrs. H knows very little about her husband's business. She complains of this but Mr. H will never answer her questions such as: "How is your business; how much do you take in; why do you work so late?" Her attitude toward her husband is "someone who should give her money." She has never considered the possibility of working herself. She says, "If I weren't a sick woman, I would leave my husband." When asked what she would do, she replied, "I don't know." On no occasion does she say, "go back to work."

##### 2. *Cultural Factors*

Mrs. H tells how superior her family is to that of her husband's since she is the daughter of a teacher. Mr. H complains that his wife thinks she is above him. However, "she hasn't learned to talk English like he has and never reads a paper." "She always wants to be something she isn't" (that is, "she doesn't want to take care of her house").

##### 3. *Health*

Mrs. H has the idea that she is sick and that her husband is "mean" to her (that is, "he doesn't say she is sick"). (In saying this, he identifies himself with the community, i.e., doctors, and thus differentiates himself from her and becomes an outsider.) Mr. H's attitude is that his wife is lazy (that is, she stays in bed in the morning and hires colored help three times a week).

##### 4. *Sex*

Frequency of sexual relations—twice a week. Since birth of last child, they have not had relations. Mrs. H's explanation is, "It isn't healthy so soon." Intercourse has never been repulsive to her yet the experience has always been disagreeable. "I can't just describe it but my head whirls and I cannot rest the remainder of the night." There has been an attempt on the part of both to prevent conception.

Mr. H is fond of the children but does not see why a woman "need make a fuss when she has a child." Mrs. H does not want children but "it seems like it has to be that way."

## RATIONALIZATIONS

(Person's own explanation of the situation)

*Mrs. H says:*

"I married my husband because my friends were getting married and I was tired of living in a room. I could not get along with my sister. Her children did not respect me (that is, when I told them what to do they made faces at me). My sister always took sides with her children so I moved with strangers. I was unhappy there. I did not like being in a room but wanted a home and someone to talk with. If I had been on good terms with my sister I would not have married then. People said Mr. H was mean. [By mean, she meant stingy.] But he was nice to me, took me to dances, sometimes to the opera, paying \$5 a seat. He was the only man I ever went with.

"We got married. I wasn't happy when we couldn't find a flat except at high rent so had to move into one furnished room. I didn't know much about married life. I dreaded living with my husband and begged him not to make me live with him right away. We didn't have relations for ten days after we were married. I was afraid I might have children (I didn't want a child because I didn't have a home for one). I didn't know how to keep from having one. My husband said he knew how to prevent it, but nine months after I was married I got pregnant. I suppose these things had to happen but thought I would keep from having any more. When I went to the doctor for prenatal care about four months later, he told me I would have trouble in having a child as it wasn't lying right. When he was born (at Hospital) I had a hard time (that is, the doctor had to use the instruments and it hurt me a great deal). Two months after this I felt sick (backache). Dr. Hammond told me I had heart trouble. I have been sick since that time. If I had not had a child I would not have had this sickness. A woman in the hospital told me how to keep from having another child. I did this. Three and a half years later I got pregnant again.

"I never talk to my husband very often about these things. I never have liked living with him. At these times I get dizzy and stay awake all night. If I ever complain he doesn't care as he is all for himself (that is, he says it won't hurt me).

Rex likes his father. He doesn't respect me. He swears and kicks at me. I don't know how to handle him. He acts that way because

he sees his father holler at me. It is hard for me to do anything with him because of my sickness. [Her back aches and at times her heart beats rapidly.]

When Rex is sick my husband worries. He comes home several times a day to see him. I was in the hospital for two weeks and he never came once to see me.

"My husband is a very mean man (meaning of mean: he is all for himself). He does not want friends; he does not want to talk to me but would rather read the paper. When I complain of being sick, he tells me that my sickness is in my head. He has no sympathy for me. He is strong and therefore has no feeling for anyone else. When he was first married he was different, but at that time he was not such a strong man, that is, he had an operation for appendicitis and hernia.

"My husband will never be different. Not many wives would stand for what I do. Most women would leave him. [She takes no blame upon herself for the situation.]

"But whatever I say about him, he hasn't another woman. He isn't that kind of a man."

*Mr. H says:*

"I married my wife because she was lonely, always talked about wanting a home. She was a good worker. She had saved \$1,000 from her work (which she spent for doctor bills). I thought I was doing her a favor in marrying her and giving her a home and children. I thought that was what she wanted.

"From the first she had the idea she was better than I was, that she came from such a good family. I don't like her because she isn't educated [that is, she doesn't read papers and books. He isn't educated either but he reads].

"Then she got the idea in her head that she was sick. She is a coward (that is, when she was in the hospital she made more fuss than any woman in the hospital about having her baby).

"All her family are sickly. Her sister here complains of being sick and runs to doctors but there is nothing wrong with her. One sister in New York really was sick with tuberculosis.

"At first I felt sorry for her and listened to it all. I took her to the best doctors. Still she steals out and goes to doctors. [He occasionally finds a doctor bill but doesn't know how she pays it.]

"She never wanted children. She is not like other women, always so touchy. I am glad she had the last child as I thought it might make her forget her troubles but it hasn't done much good.

"She is so stubborn no one can tell her anything. [He does not see that his wife's idea that she is sick affects her behavior in the same way that it would if she were really sick.]

"She fussed for a telephone in the house saying that she is afraid to be alone and might want to call me in case she got sick, but she has never called me up.

"She often tells me that I wish she would die so that I could get another wife and that is the reason I don't want her to go to doctors and take care of herself."

11-25-26 *Visited Mrs. Stock*, a sister of Mrs. H, living next door.

Mrs. Stock has been married 17 years and she has three children, a girl age fifteen, a boy fourteen and a girl twelve years. Her husband is a tailor earning about \$35 a week. The couple get along very well together. Mrs. Stock says, "Compared to my sister, we have nothing. She has better furniture, her husband has a business and yet she is more unhappy than I am. If I haven't a coat, my husband works at night to make me one. If my sister hasn't one, her husband says she doesn't need a coat."

Mrs. Stock gave the following information about the H's:

#### HEREDITY

Mrs. H's parents were healthy. They died eight years ago from hardship during the war. None of the other members of the family have ever been sick except one sister who had appendicitis and another who had some tubercular trouble from which she recovered. Mrs. Stock herself was well until about a year ago when she developed heart trouble (that is, no doctor has diagnosed her as having a heart disease but she has been told that she has a goiter. Since then she notices that her heart beats rapidly and loudly.) Her youngest child also has heart trouble (that is, she has a goiter but has not been diagnosed).

#### CULTURAL PATTERN

Mrs. H, before her marriage, was a good worker and liked her work. She never missed a day. She always helped Mrs. Stock with some of the housework when she had time and did not complain about

it. On two occasions Mrs. Stock remembers that she was ill, and Mrs. H scrubbed and cleaned the house thoroughly because she was expecting friends. "She always wanted a nice place to entertain friends." She dressed herself attractively. Two different summers she spent her vacation at a summer resort. She never went to dances but visited friends and went to concerts.

Mrs. H's father, grandfather, and uncle were teachers. The children were always encouraged to read. Before her marriage, Mrs. H read newspapers and books (that is, love stories written in German). Since her marriage she has done no reading.

#### FACTORS IN ADJUSTMENT AND CONFLICT BETWEEN FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

##### 1. *Cultural Factors*

Mrs. H does not belong to a club, but would join one if she had a new coat and hat. Her coat is four years old, cost \$135 at that time but is now out of style. Mrs. Stock's husband would be glad to remodel it for her. Mrs. Stock can understand that Mrs. H should have some contacts outside the home. "It would be a good thing for her if she would join her sister-in-law's club."

##### 2. *Health*

Mrs. H learned of Dr. Race and Dr. Rice through a neighbor whose child had heart trouble; Mrs. Stock has often discussed Mrs. H's health with the neighbors and her acquaintances who have recommended various doctors.

#### FACTORS IN ADJUSTMENT AND CONFLICT WITHIN FAMILY GROUP

##### 1. *Economic*

Mr. H has always been successful financially. He recently tried to purchase the flat building in which they live. In the past Mrs. H has complained of the flat in which they were living but Mr. H's reply was that he could not afford a better one. More recently, however, he expressed a willingness to move the family. (Mrs. H feels, however, that this is only a scheme to get her away from Mrs. Stock who is the only person with whom she has any contact. Because of this she has refused to move. Mrs. Stock can see, however, how a change of en-



vironment might be beneficial, how Mrs. H might be able to have a home of the type that she wanted in the past and how this might compensate for her feeling of dissatisfaction with her present conditions and relations with her husband. She will encourage Mrs. H to move into a better flat in a better neighborhood. She also sees the possibility that Mrs. H may rely more upon her than she does upon her husband in making decisions. If such is the case, it would be better for her to move in order to facilitate greater reliance upon her husband.)

## 2. *Health*

Mrs. H was never ill until after the birth of her first child. She had difficulty at that time (that is, she seemed to have more pain than had Mrs. Stock at the time of her confinement). Six or seven months after Rex's birth she had severe hemorrhages of the womb. She went to a doctor who performed an operation on the womb at which time she was given ether. A month or so after that, when she went to another doctor, he told her she had heart trouble.

"Much of Mrs. H's sickness before the birth of the last child was due to worry and fear of pregnancy."

Mrs. H complains of backaches and of her heart beating rapidly.

Mrs. Stock feels that Mrs. H must have heart trouble in some form or other (that is, she has often felt how rapidly and loudly her heart beats). However, she is quite sure Mrs. H worries about this a great deal; that it does not pain her and does not interfere with her leading a normal life (that is, with her care of the children, with her making contacts outside the home, and with her doing much of the housework).

## 3. *Sex*

Mrs. H never talked to Mrs. Stock of her sex life. She does not know how much sex knowledge she had at the time of her marriage. However, she had girl friends with whom she may have had discussions on this topic.

She had often expressed the desire that she have no children, saying, "They are such a nuisance."

## RATIONALIZATIONS

"My sister was undecided whether or not to marry Mr. H. Just before her marriage (that is, a week before) she cried a great deal.

She often told me that she feared that he would be mean (that is, stingy. [Here Mrs. H gets support from her sister in her attitude toward her husband.] One time when Mr. H was ill before his marriage Mrs. H went to see him. She found him rooming in a room in a basement. She was sure he lived there because he was too stingy to provide himself with a better place.)

"However, I encouraged her to marry him as I wanted her to have a home.

"From the first they had trouble. Mr. H was always sore whenever anyone came to the house. He wanted her to continue working but she refused because she was tired of work. He was too stingy to provide a flat so they took a furnished room. He never thinks of anyone but himself.

"My sister and I are together a great deal. We usually talk about things we have read in the paper (that is, I have more to tell her as I do more reading. For instance last week we talked about the Queen, about dress sales and styles, about the clothes we would like to have, etc.)."

#### ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

In analysis of this case the following factors are to be considered:

1. Lack of adjustment in response relations.
  - a) Sexual antagonism
    - (1) Wife's dislike of sexual intercourse
    - (2) Wife's complaint that her husband does not give her attention. (He does not talk to her, etc.)
2. Expression of lack of adjustment in response to relations in:
  - a) Complaints of ill health—"heart trouble."
  - b) Economic conflict:
 

Her husband refuses to talk of his business, etc.
  - c) Cultural recriminations.
 

Superiority of wife's family, therefore, superior rôle of wife, etc.
3. Compensation on part of wife through illness.
  - a) Rôle of wife as invalid (has maid, goes to best doctors, unable to have sex relations like a well wife).

TREATMENT<sup>1</sup>

(December, 1926, to December, 1927)

- A. Secured Mrs. H's health record from dispensary and hospital. Two specialists made the following diagnosis: (1) Slight mitral leak, heart compensated. (2) Nervous heart. Basal metabolism tests were made which showed no evidence of hyperthyroidism. The mental hygiene clinic's diagnosis follows: psycho-neurosis, mixed type. Medical diagnosis of slight mitro-lesion of the heart, with full compensation present. "We consider the prognosis in this case poor, and do not feel that intensive social work is indicated."
- B. Processes in treatment
1. By interpreting Mrs. H's behavior to her sister and by interpreting Mrs. Stock's rôle in producing this behavior, she consented to do all she could do to persuade Mrs. H to move from her present surroundings, to make more outside contacts, and therefore not dwell upon her ailments.
    - a) Showed her how in the past Mrs. H has depended upon her sister and grown farther away from her husband.
    - b) Showed her how self-centered Mrs. H is and what few contacts she has.
    - c) Showed her how Mrs. H has always had a pronounced wish for a "nice home" and how by moving she might realize this wish.
  2. Interviews with husband.
    - a) Took up the subject of sexual relations—interpreted wife's attitude toward him in regard to sexual intercourse. Showed him how it will take time for her attitude to change and how it will call for a certain amount of tolerance and understanding on his part. The fact that she behaves as though she were sick is just as significant as though she really were sick.
    - b) Took up subject of moving. Explained to him the advisability of giving Mrs. H different surroundings. Showed him

<sup>1</sup> The treatment in this case was carried on through numerous contacts, many of which required more than three hours of time. There was constant and patient reiteration. The general outline of treatment as given here is, of course, much simplified.

## DOMESTIC DISCORD

how persons behave in a certain way in an old place. Mrs. H has always been sick in her present home. It would be better if she could get into a place where old associations did not mean so much to her.

- c) Discussed possibility of Mrs. H's joining a club such as the one her sister-in-law attends. Explained to him the necessity of her making new contacts. If the matter of getting out of the house depends upon buying her some new clothes this should be done by him.

3. Interviews with Mrs. H.

- a) Tried to ascertain just what is the basis for her attitude toward sex experience. Her attitude toward her first experience was one of fear. It was very painful. Later she associated pregnancy with the whole experience.
- b) Took up subject of moving. Tried to appeal to Mrs. H's interest in the kind of home she has always wanted. Tried to take advantage of a pronounced wish in order to counteract wishes to remain near her sister.
- c) Tried to persuade her to allow the colored woman to come to the house but twice a week, explaining to her that this would show her husband that she is willing to make some concessions if he is willing to provide her with a better home. (The object is to get Mrs. H to be more dependent upon herself.) It is possible that she identifies the colored woman with her being sick and therefore plays up to the situation. As long as she has people to help her, she is ill.
- d) Took up the subject of her making outside contacts: for example, joining her sister-in-law's club. Told her how self-centered she is, what few contacts she has compared with her husband, how she has nothing to talk about except her sickness and other trivial things in which he is not interested. If she had wider contacts, she might be able to discuss his business and other topics with him. Her contacts are too much limited to those with her sister.
- e) Attempted to interpret her behavior to her; showed her that by believing she is sick, she behaves in the same way as though she were really sick.

- 1) Explained to her that people are always saying they are sick when they want to get out of doing something unpleasant; for example, they give sickness as an excuse for not keeping an appointment which is unpleasant to them. Had her recollect the times she has done this. (Attempted to get at the self-deception here.)
- 2) The next logical step from the recollection of bits of her past experience was to tie these up with the more complex situation which existed, namely, "backache" to avoid having marital relations; "heart trouble" to avoid having another child, etc., i.e., excuses for not being able to cope with her environment.
- f) Direction of Mrs. H's interest and attention into a more organizing channel than that of her sickness. Incidentally, this was always done without her knowledge, for example, one type of motivation used was that of her interest in her baby. (At first she refused to go out of the house except to see a doctor or to shop.) She was encouraged to take her baby for fresh air, the real objective being to get her out of the house.
4. Visited Mrs. Silverman:  
Interpreted Mrs. H's condition to her; she is quite fond of Mrs. H and feels sure that she is really not ill or at least not in a semi-invalid stage. She occasionally goes to see her. She is willing to go there often and take Mrs. H out if she will go with her. She realizes Mrs. H's condition quite well. (Mrs. Silverman is very intelligent and refined. She has a son who is attending medical school and a daughter in high school.)
5. Numerous visits to Mrs. Stock.  
Through reiteration and reiteration Mrs. H's sister has become very co-operative. She seems to understand Mrs. H's condition much better. She is constantly encouraging her to move. On one occasion she went apartment hunting with her.

## PRESENT STATUS

Today we have in terms of overt behavior a woman who is assuming more and more the rôle of wife and mother. Although she has a

domestic help her one day a week, she cleans the house, does her cooking, and a considerable amount of washing. She has not consulted any doctors "as she feels well." She thinks of her husband as "kind, considerate and as caring a great deal for her" as evidenced by the fact that he sent her for a vacation with the children for three weeks, paying \$35 a week for their expenses there; that he gave her money for a new wardrobe; that he wrote her "wonderful letters" and moved her from a \$30 to a \$55 flat upon her return. A husband, on the other hand, who thinks of his wife "as a good mother who is trying hard." A sister who regards her younger sister "as in so much better health," and her brother-in-law as "trying hard to please his wife."

But if one views the situation more intensively, one will find a more fundamental change.

1. Both husband and wife have learned to take a more detached point of view toward their own situation. Mrs. H says, "I complained so much and was so upset that I don't blame my husband for having been disgusted."

Mrs. H, particularly, seems to realize how she was deceiving herself by being sick. With this came a substitution of new interests; later, in new surroundings, and a recognition that change in her own attitudes brought about a change in her husband's attitudes in any given situation—a development, therefore, of a whole process of change. For example, when Mrs. H began to again play the rôle of the wife, health, economic, and cultural conflicts disappeared.

2. Couple have a more wholesome attitude toward marital relations. Mrs. H says, "I don't worry so much about that—my husband thinks more of my feelings."

3. Husband sometimes remarks about his business, but according to his wife, "I have more to think about now. My baby takes so much of my time and I try to get out more. The day seems to pass so quickly. I am busy all the time so I do not have much time to think."

#### THE NATURE OF SOCIAL THERAPY

The Hillman case thus shows an approach quite different from that current in case-work both in terms of diagnosis and of treatment. While previous treatment of the case (see footnote describing early contacts) had been in

terms of economic conflict, the description of treatment from the sociological point of view reveals that therapeutic effort centered chiefly about the sickness behavior of the wife upon the assumption that this behavior represented an escape from marriage relations. This, then, may be called the "casual situation," or "factor." The assumption is that if one successfully treats the "casual situation" the other factors, e.g., economic conflict, cultural conflict, etc., will tend to adjust themselves—although, obviously, treatment of them may hasten the process if it follows, rather than precedes, treatment of the "casual situation."

The technique used in one case, of course, cannot be expected to be applicable to every case except in its most general aspects. The Hillman case is presented here to show only in a general way a sociological approach, the details of which are yet to be worked out. It is clear, however, that the work of the therapist in domestic discord cases consists in breaking down certain barriers which have developed in the relations between husband and wife and which prevent amiable relations within those areas of interaction, these tending in turn to lead to individualization in other areas or phases of relations. Once having broken down these barriers, the situation is such that by a trial-and-error process adjustments may be worked out in other areas of interaction, thus strengthening, rather than weakening, whatever identification there is already present.

It is clear, accordingly, that the criterion of whether or not adjustment has been effected consists in evidence to show a change of attitudes in the direction of domestic accord. This is well illustrated in the Hillman case in which the wife comes to regard her husband as kind and solicitous where previously she had thought of him as mean and stingy.

A change in attitudes, of course, may be either of long or short duration and so require some definition of what duration shall be considered of significance. But duration in time is not necessarily the only test; the nature of the change may be equally pertinent or even the sole criterion of whether or not a change of attitudes is significant. If the change involves attitudes not at all related to the "casual situation" it may be anticipated that such changes will be of short duration. This only re-emphasizes the need for discovering the phase of relations in which discord had its origin before treatment is attempted.



PART IV  
CONCLUSIONS



## CHAPTER XV

### THE MEASUREMENT OF SOCIAL CONTROL

This study of the diagnosis and treatment of domestic discord shows, among other things, the contents of case-work records in domestic discord cases. Such records contain five types of data: (1) accounts of overt behavior, (2) rationalizations, (3) background materials, (4) diagnoses of specialists, and (5) accounts of treatment.

Accounts of overt behavior are not, generally, descriptions of how the couple behaves as observed by the worker, but second-hand reports from relatives, the couple themselves, neighbors, friends, etc., and most generally in moralistic terms. That is, "John is a bad man," which is to say that John behaves in a way which is considered bad by the group. Or, "John gambles," meaning that John takes chances with his money in a reprehensible way. The data being in moralistic terms, the case-worker feels that it is necessary to verify whether or not John does actually behave contrary to group standards as he is said to do. For scientific analysis, however, what is needed are objective descriptions of behavior as recorded by an impartial observer.

Rationalizations are those accounts given by the persons themselves in justification of their behavior. For example, Mary leaves her husband because he threw a plate at her, which John explains he did because his wife refused to get supper for him. The implication is, clearly, that a wife is justified in leaving her husband if he throws plates at her and that a husband is justified in throwing plates if his wife

refuses to cook for him. Both represent attempts on the part of the individual to justify past conduct in terms of group standards, regardless of what may have been the motivating factors at the time. Case-workers are inclined to interpret such accounts too literally, instead of interpreting them in their setting as symbolical of something more deep-lying.

Background materials usually consist of a chronological account of early life, much as anyone would tell it if he were asked. These accounts often fail their purpose because they are in no way specifically related to the problem in hand.

Diagnoses of specialists are usually those of physicians and are generally in physiological or psychological terms. The terms themselves are descriptive but are often taken by the case-worker to be explanatory. For example: the diagnosis, *dementia praecox*, means that the patient belongs to that group of persons who behave thus and so. The case-worker takes the diagnosis to mean that anything out of the ordinary in the patient's behavior must be due to the fact that he is a "*dementia praecox*."

Accounts of treatment are primarily common-sense descriptions of motor behavior rather than of verbal. That is, records of visits, references to other organizations, court action, conferences, and the like. What was said in the interviews, conferences, and visits is ordinarily not recorded in full—sometimes not at all—but at best only summarized.

This is not to say that all these data are unessential. In general, each type of data may become quite useful if properly handled and amplified. Accounts of overt behavior should be made more objective. Since the worker cannot be present to observe such behavior herself to any high degree, she will have to control the interview in such a way as to get

a relatively objective account from the persons themselves. Verification in domestic discord cases should be incidental and moralistic terms eliminated. More wealth of rationalizations needs to be added, but with the appreciation that their meaning is symbolical and not literal. Background materials need to be related specifically to the problem in hand—be as objective as possible and implying some conception of organic unity. Diagnoses of specialists contain descriptive materials, but are generally of little value in explaining the discord because they have to do with the physiological or psychological functioning of the organism, while the problem of domestic discord is social and can only be explained in terms of social interaction. Accounts of treatment should include more detailed descriptions of verbal manipulation with less emphasis upon the motor. Thus one may conclude that case-records are not at fault in the types of data recorded so much as in the points of emphasis; the lack of detail; the moralistic terminology; and, in fact, the lack of a consistent point of view, and the objective, scientific vocabulary which goes with it. Case-records are, to be brief, common-sense records.

#### THE PROBLEM OF SOCIOLOGY

The problem of sociology is to get more precision in analysis by either or both of the following methods: (1) definition of concepts; (2) invention of scales of measurement.

Common sense has its conceptual schemes to which experience may be referred, but such concepts, or frames of reference, are too inaccurate for science. Sociology has tried to minimize this inaccuracy, often, by statistical manipulation—a process of abstraction by which series of concrete

data may be related to certain simple mathematical principles, such as the law of chance, the law of large numbers, etc. These series of concrete observations may be obtained by either of two processes: counting or measuring. If the process is one of counting, obviously, the accuracy and usefulness of such series depends upon the precision and utility of the concepts employed. The same thing may be said for the scales used in measurement.

Sociologists have often been content with concepts of common sense for counting and statistical analysis. The result has been that much of the analysis was inadequate, and added little or nothing to casual observation by competent observers, because no amount of statistical manipulation could correct the inaccuracies involved in the concepts themselves. The future will see development of either more accurate terminology or of schemes of measurement, or both.

Psychology, on the other hand, early became experimental—meaning that chief emphasis was placed upon the measuring process under controlled conditions. This procedure is in itself a process of setting up a frame of reference and then measuring occurrences within the system, according to some scale. Measurement, however, can be made with a minimum of control of conditions and these series statistically treated. Thus, sociologists could easily develop scales of measurement to be used where experimental control was not possible, or difficult to obtain; although, obviously, the use of the scale itself would constitute some measure of control. With this sort of data one could arrive at certain abstractions which would, then, constitute new frames of reference for further observation.

The process of analysis, however, might easily be carried

out the other way about. Concepts might be carefully defined, first, and then series of counted frequencies subjected to statistical analysis and so reduced to abstract principles. Whichever approach one takes is often a function of one's philosophy and revives anew the ancient conflict between nominalism and realism. But in either case there will be more precision added to the fund of knowledge, whereas statistical manipulation of series which represent counted occurrences of common-sense units only eliminates the extremes in occurrences and leaves one with a refined common sense.

The method of science is everywhere the setting up of conceptual systems as substitutes for the perceptual or "factual" world. One of the devices in this process is the conceptual contrast such as that in sociology between the rural and urban environments. These environments are not perceptual in any exact sense but rather conceptual, the rural indicating the typical organization of attitudes, activities, and wishes of the primary group, in contrast with the complete development of the urban environment based upon secondary contacts. Any specific case will contain, of course, elements of both the rural and the urban.

To those who are in the habit of thinking of science as a body of concrete data, such conceptions are, of course, disturbing and are little understood. If science were a body of concrete facts, then science would be forever changing, whereas the utility of science lies in its stability—that stability being a thing of method. One of the chief functions of science is to introduce stability into the world of fluctuating experience, to set up frames of reference which are relatively permanent in comparison with the world of concrete experience. But even these frames of reference need to be

revised from time to time, though they are far from being as fleeting as concrete experience. Yet the method by which they are revised is comparatively unchanging and must be so or the whole fabric will ravel and become odds and ends.<sup>1</sup>

In the preceding chapters, accordingly, an attempt has been made to show how cases of domestic discord may be analyzed with reference to conceptual schemes, which, methodologically, are in accord with the demands of science. The chief essentials of this attempt lie in relating the elements of discord to a conceptual scheme of interacting units which constitute the family relationship. The relevancy of such an analysis depends upon the degree to which it provides a useful basis for treatment. This immediately brings one face to face with the second problem with which this study has been concerned, viz., the measurement of the effect of treatment.

#### MEASURING EFFECT OF TREATMENT

The usual assumption in attempts to measure the effects of social therapy, as has been seen, is to assume that whatever results were desirable can be attributed to the treatment of the case-worker, the undesirable ones being the result of factors beyond her control. The worker thus takes credit for all the treatment which is successful and denies responsibility for the unsuccessful. The lack of logic in this point of view is obvious. Yet, when one attempts to determine the effectiveness of her technique he is faced with many difficulties, many of which arise from the nature of the problem.

First, it is necessary to make allowance for the effects of certain fortuitous or conjectural factors over which the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Ritchie, *Scientific Method*, pp. 13-14; and Hobson, *The Domain of Natural Science*, pp. 29-31.



worker has no control. Such things as accidents, sudden illnesses, death of children or relatives, etc., sometimes bring about adjustments which cannot be attributed to anything done by the case-worker.

Second, it is necessary to determine what were the treatment techniques used. When the source of one's data is the case-record this means piecing together from the description of contacts with the client, how the worker attempted to bring about a certain desired end. While this is not so difficult if records are fairly complete with details of the interaction between client and worker, the reconstruction of typical treatment methods or processes involves some degree of abstraction.

Third, having allowed for the effects of conjectural factors, and having determined the type of treatment given, does it necessarily follow that the effectiveness of the technique can be determined by counting the number of adjustments? It may well be that the determining features of the treatment process were actually unique ones introduced as variations in the typical procedure, but which were not necessarily recognized by the case-worker nor even recorded in the concrete account.

If one cannot, then, test the effectiveness of a procedure by counting the successes, how can it be determined? Two distinct methods immediately suggest themselves: (1) each technique of treatment may be tested experimentally, or (2) each technique may be tested by bringing it into relation with what is already known about human nature. That is, if the technique can be shown to be logically in conflict with known principles of human behavior, the presumption is that the technique is ineffective, or has a diametrically opposite effect than that desired.

The experimental technique of testing the results of social therapy may be of two kinds: (*a*) the establishment of laboratory control, or (*b*) the setting-up of a control group. The first is generally considered to be impossible or very difficult in the field of social behavior. At any rate, to make such tests would require some modification in the method used by the physicist, let us say. The second, which might be done by treating every other case which came to the agency is often held to be socially undesirable.

The second procedure, that of testing a technique in terms of its logical concurrence or conflict with principles of social behavior, is, of course, open to certain fallacies, yet in the absence of any more exact method of testing will yield good results if skilfully used. For example, if one method of control of domestic discord is to appeal to relatives of the family to bring "moral" pressure upon the husband and wife in the interest of harmonious relations within the home, and it is generally known that relatives have little or no influence in the rapid changes of city life, that technique is obviously running counter to current conditions and may be expected to fail, except in rare instances. Again, if the method used is that of court pressure, and it is known that human beings generally look upon the appeal to an outside agency for assistance in dealing with the problems of family life as a breach in the confidential nature of marriage relations, it does not take any great stretch of the imagination to foresee that the usual result will be an attitude of betrayal on the part of the one toward whom the pressure is directed.

Or, again, let us take the general technique of persuasion. It may be stated as a law of human nature that the effectiveness of persuasion varies directly with the square of the degree to which the course of behavior proposed corresponds

to the wishes of the individual, and inversely with the square of the elapse of time between the proposal and the carrying-out of the proposed line of conduct. Thus it should be obvious to the case-worker that any proposal counter to the wishes of the individual is not likely to be carried out, unless it be done immediately, regardless of how thoroughly it may be accepted at the time. Salesmen recognize this and so insist upon one's "signing on the dotted line"—a procedure which obligates one legally to complete the line of behavior initiated.

The alternative seems to lie in the direction of setting up certain "quasi-experimental" controls. First, the worker by a more thorough analysis of the case may formulate a plan of treatment. Then, record in detail both the technique used in getting the plan accepted and the immediate results. This should be followed, not only by later descriptions of contacts and of changes which are observed, but by analysis of these changes and the factors producing them. If this is done after each contact, in terms of what is known about human nature, the record will present data sufficient to generalize from with regard to what factors in the treatment technique produced the results recorded and what factors failed to produce expected results and why. Certain experimental tools may be introduced in order to get a more objective measure of results, thus giving to the case a degree of objectivity yet to be obtained in this field.<sup>1</sup> And while this would still be somewhat less objective than the results of experimental studies involving a laboratory technique or a control group, it would represent a great improvement

<sup>1</sup> For example, some adaptation of the association word test might be devised, giving the test both before and after social therapy. Such a test might be given verbally or it might be given in the form of a printed schedule after the fashion of the Pressey Test.

upon present-day methods, which depend so much upon hunches, and constitute a definite gain in the social field—probably all that can be expected for the present.

#### ADJUSTMENT OF DOMESTIC DISCORD

One may now outline in a tentative way the types of adjustment processes, with the mechanisms involved, from the standpoint of the individual:

1. Asceticism: the mechanisms being
  - a) Suppression
  - b) Repression
2. Sublimation: of which there are two forms
  - a) Transcendental
  - b) Mundane
3. Realization of wishes through corrective therapy

Ascetic adjustment involves following accord patterns of behavior in the presence of discord elements or impulses, by pushing the discord elements out of mind, i.e., by repression, or by following the dictates of an outside personality, i.e., by suppression. Where the mechanism is repression the individual may become so inhibited with respect to certain elements tending to create discord as to keep them completely out of consciousness. The disorganizing feature of this type of adjustment lies in the tendency for these repressed impulses to find expression in other contacts and so result in the disorganization of the person in other phases of his social relations. This may be seen, for example, in the case of a wife whose cravings for response are unsatisfied so that she becomes extremely dictatorial in her contacts with her children.

Where the mechanism is that of suppression, whether exercised through the courts, the larger family group, or the community, adjustment tends to be only in the realm of

overt behavior, with a tendency to aggravation of the covert phases. Thus, in time, the accommodation accomplished at the expense of pent-up emotions tends to break up into open conflict as soon as the pressure is removed.

Adjustments accomplished through sublimation may be either transcendental or mundane in form. Where the adjustment is made by transferring one's interest to the things of another world, either through looking to a world hereafter or by constructing for one's self an imaginary world as a substitute for the present, the form may be called transcendental. Where the transference is to satisfaction of the impulse to other avenues of expression, as the satisfaction of the impulse for response in contact with one's children as a substitute for that denied by one's mate, the form may be called mundane. Adjustments through sublimation, though on the surface seemingly desirable from the standpoint of the group, often lead to other problems in personal organization.

The third type of adjustment is that in which the wishes of the person are brought to realization through modifications made in the situation in such a way as to make this possible. Such modifications cannot, ordinarily, be made by the individual himself but require the intervention of a social therapist. It is toward this type of adjustment, presumably, that the social therapist is working.

#### METHODS OF SOCIAL THERAPY

The methods of the social therapist may be outlined, tentatively, in the following formal fashion:

- i. Verbalized control, i. e., modification of attitudes through primary contacts
  - a) Overt behavior modified by
    - i. Persuasion

2. Suggestion
3. Displacement
- b) Covert behavior, modified by
  1. Suggestion
  2. Displacement
2. Educational control, i. e., modification of attitudes through secondary contacts

The persuasion technique has already been amply discussed. It may be reiterated, however, that it is argumentative in form and is much more applicable where immediate overt behavior is desired in a specified way. Suggestion may be direct or indirect, the latter being the more effective on the whole. Both types of suggestion may be used effectively toward initiating either overt or covert behavior.

The displacement technique consists in giving to both husband and wife a mechanistic explanation of their conflicts, i.e., in terms of simple, predictable behavior patterns, to take the place of the usual moralistic explanations. This technique is well represented in the treatment of the Hillman case. (See pp. 231-33) The efficacy of this technique lies in the fact that if successful at all it tends to modify both overt and covert behavior at the same time by breaking down the barriers of inner tensions and antagonisms.

The possibilities of educational control are yet to be realized, but it seems plausible to expect that the social therapist will take advantage of the possibilities for secondary contacts to carry on his process of treatment when he is personally absent. The propagandist has demonstrated the effectiveness of the use of secondary contacts in "putting across" behavior patterns, so it is to be expected that the social therapist will find the same technique an asset in the treatment of domestic discord.

## ORGANIZED ASPECTS OF TREATMENT

The question naturally arises as to how such treatment, as has been indicated, may best be given. May domestic discord be treated effectively by family case-work agencies? Or would it be more desirable to delegate the matter to specialized agencies? And if so, what sort of agency could best carry on this type of work?

In view of the fact that treatment techniques have not yet been worked out in any detail, the problem is not so simple as it would seem at first. For the agency which carries on the treatment process will have to do considerable research, both into the analysis of domestic discord, and into the invention of treatment techniques as well. The problem is, thus, primarily one of research. And, while there are indications of the feasibility of such attempts in connection with family case-work agencies,<sup>1</sup> there are also certain handicaps where the work is carried on under such conditions as exist at the present time.

In the first place, the case-work point of view is not wholly conducive to the best results. Case-work agencies are concerned, necessarily, with immediate problems. Thus the social therapist treating domestic discord cannot help but feel the pressure for immediate action and results, when success in research depends, as often as not, upon freedom from such pressure. Then, too, the routine of case-work

<sup>1</sup> Success in the work under the direction of Harriet R. Mowrer, already referred to, demonstrates the feasibility of such an attempt in connection with a case-work agency. Here considerable progress has been made in working out types of diagnoses with their appropriate schemes of treatment. Further indication of the potentialities of family case-work in this direction may be seen in the fact that of all the agencies studied, those engaged in family welfare work show a higher development of treatment techniques in domestic discord problems than others dealing with these problems.

agencies constitutes a handicap, inasmuch as the division of work, for the most part, is upon a geographical basis and not in terms of problems. This results in a tendency, either to organize specialized work within districts so that the worker in domestic discord problems is also expected to treat other problems occurring in her cases, or to limit the function of the worker in domestic discord problems to that of an advisor. If the work is carried on within the district, pressure of work due to large case counts, shortage of workers, etc., tend to handicap the domestic discord worker in giving thorough treatment. The nature of the problems in domestic discord cases also requires treatment by more carefully trained and experienced workers than are often available to case-work agencies.

But probably as serious as any of the others, is the stigma thought to be attached to appealing to a family welfare agency. It cannot be expected, accordingly, that the task of working out techniques for treating each type of domestic discord can be completed so long as the sample is biased by the appeal of the family welfare agency to one class in the population. Also, the tendency for other problems to becloud the horizon is not wholly conducive to the best efforts.

#### THE DOMESTIC DISCORD CLINIC

The alternative seems to lie in the direction of the establishment of clinics whose function it is to analyze and treat cases of domestic discord. Such clinics could be operated upon much the same basis as are medical clinics, except that their services should not be restricted to any social group. In this way, with competent staffs, sufficient results should soon be available which might be taken over by departments



within case-work agencies, courts, and other institutions interested in the social control of domestic discord.

Probably the most desirable auspices under which a clinic could be established would be a large university or foundation. This would give the staff of the clinic access to the services of other specialists, in addition to sociologists and social workers, such as psychologists, physicians, neurologists, physiologists, and psychiatrists.<sup>†</sup>

The operation of such a clinic would, accordingly, contribute not only to the understanding and control of domestic discord, but furnish as well a wealth of materials which would make the whole process of social interaction more intelligible to both the sociologist and the social worker.

<sup>†</sup> See Appendix B for plan of clinical organization.



## APPENDIXES



# APPENDIX A

## SUPPLEMENTARY TABLES

### TABLE I

DIAGNOSTIC FACTORS IN DOMESTIC DISCORD CASES: JEWISH SOCIAL  
SERVICE BUREAU, 1925; UNITED CHARITIES, 1924-25

DIAGNOSTIC FACTORS	NUMBER OF CASES IN WHICH FACTOR OCCURRED		
	Both Agencies	Jewish Social Service Bureau	United Charities
Abuse.....	642	305	337
Drink.....	485	96	389
Immorality.....	467	190	277
Irregular habits, gambling, etc..	294	181	113
Laziness.....	286	104	182
Affinity.....	283	114	169
Mental deficiency.....	281	162	119
Bad housekeeping.....	262	146	116
Nagging.....	202	131	71
Family interference.....	197	119	78
Uncontrolled temper.....	196	136	60
Jealousy.....	134	75	59
Extravagance.....	123	71	52
Physical deficiency.....	111	51	60
Stinginess.....	96	75	21
Venereal disease.....	79	34	45
Sex refusal.....	78	59	19
Excessive sex demands.....	78	47	31
Slovenliness.....	73	37	36
Children by former marriage...	65	41	24
Discipline of children.....	58	23	35
Evil companions.....	54	34	20
Restlessness.....	36	8	28
Age differences.....	31	16	15
Inadequate income.....	27	11	16
Sex perversion.....	24	9	15
Black sheep.....	22	10	12
Religious differences.....	18	3	15
National differences.....	7	0	7

TABLE II

RELATION OF DIAGNOSTIC FACTORS TO PROBLEMS IN DOMESTIC  
DISCORD CASES: JEWISH SOCIAL BUREAU, 1925;  
UNITED CHARITIES, 1924-25

DIAGNOSTIC FACTORS	NUMBER OF CASES BY PROBLEMS IN WHICH FACTOR OCCURRED				
	All Problems	Domestic Difficulty	Deser- tion	Non- Support	Combina- tions
Abuse.....	642	204	141	44	253
Drink.....	485	81	145	48	198
Immorality.....	467	121	127	31	188
Irregular habits.....	294	88	72	23	111
Laziness.....	286	68	96	33	89
Affinity.....	283	56	92	17	118
Mental deficiency.....	281	96	57	16	112
Bad housekeeping.....	262	79	44	15	124
Nagging.....	202	67	44	11	80
Family interference.....	197	66	43	12	76
Uncontrolled temper.....	196	77	40	5	74
Jealousy.....	134	54	29	5	46
Extravagance.....	123	43	18	6	56
Physical deficiency.....	111	30	31	4	46
Stinginess.....	96	44	9	2	41
Venereal disease.....	79	21	19	8	31
Sex refusal.....	78	40	9	2	27
Excessive sex demands.....	78	30	15	4	29
Slovenliness.....	73	18	12	5	38
Children by former marriage.....	65	24	10	3	28
Discipline of children.....	58	17	10	5	26
Evil companions.....	54	24	12	3	15
Restlessness.....	36	3	18	1	14
Age differences.....	31	7	8	1	15
Inadequate income.....	27	10	8	9	0
Sex perversion.....	24	5	4	2	13
Black sheep.....	22	5	5	2	10
Religious differences.....	18	3	6	2	7
National differences.....	7	3	3	1	0

TABLE III

DISTRIBUTION OF DIAGNOSTIC FACTORS BY HUSBAND AND WIFE IN  
DOMESTIC DISCORD CASES: JEWISH SOCIAL SERVICE  
BUREAU, 1925; UNITED CHARITIES, 1924-25

DIAGNOSTIC FACTORS	PERSON TO WHOM DIAGNOSTIC FACTOR REFERRED	
	Husband	Wife
Abuse.....	524	61
Drink.....	474	50
Immorality.....	211	308
Irregular habits.....	263	46
Laziness.....	259	41
Affinity.....	215	81
Mental deficiency.....	142	166
Bad housekeeping.....	.....	262
Nagging.....	32	180
Family interference.....	70	139
Uncontrolled temper.....	139	79
Jealousy.....	81	54
Extravagance.....	24	101
Physical deficiency.....	48	68
Stinginess.....	91	24
Venereal disease.....	57	36
Sex refusal.....	.....	78
Slovenliness.....	13	63
Excessive sex demands.....	78	.....
Children by former marriage.....	36	33
Discipline of children.....	.....	58
Evil companions.....	42	13
Restlessness.....	33	4
Age differences.....	25	11
Sex perversion.....	21	4
Inadequate income.....	37	.....
Black sheep.....	22	.....
Religious differences.....	14	10
National differences.....	6	5

## DOMESTIC DISCORD

TABLE IV

TREATMENT TECHNIQUES IN DOMESTIC DISCORD PROBLEMS: UNITED CHARITIES, 1924-25; JEWISH SOCIAL SERVICE BUREAU, 1925

TECHNIQUE	NUMBER OF CASES BY AGENCY		
	Both	United Charities	Jewish Social Service Bureau
No record of treatment . . . . .	470	269	201
Court of Domestic Relations . . . .	942	624	318
Birth control instruction . . . . .	25	10	15
Medical examination . . . . .	33	27	6
Psychiatric examination . . . . .	94	49	45
Drink cure . . . . .	5	5	0
Ordering-and-forbidding . . . . .	109	14	95
Auto-suggestion . . . . .	2	1	1
Persuasion . . . . .	54	25	29
Housekeeping instruction . . . . .	19	3	16
Extradition . . . . .	21	9	12
Deportation . . . . .	14	8	6
Conference . . . . .	135	7	128



TABLE V

DIAGNOSTIC FACTORS IN DOMESTIC DISCORD CASES BY COURT OF DOMESTIC RELATIONS AND ORDERING-AND-FORBIDDING TREATMENT TECHNIQUES: UNITED CHARITIES, 1924-25; JEWISH SOCIAL SERVICE BUREAU, 1925

DIAGNOSTIC FACTORS	TOTAL CASES	TREATMENT TECHNIQUE	
		Court of Domestic Relations	Ordering-and-Forbidding
Abuse . . . . .	642	418	68
Drink . . . . .	485	348	27
Immorality . . . . .	467	303	43
Irregular habits . . . . .	294	195	35
Laziness . . . . .	286	200	32
Affinity . . . . .	283	168	15
Mental deficiency . . . . .	281	183	30
Bad housekeeping . . . . .	262	174	36
Nagging . . . . .	202	123	36
Family interference . . . . .	197	137	20
Uncontrolled temper . . . . .	196	118	30
Jealousy . . . . .	134	79	23
Extravagance . . . . .	123	52	17
Physical deficiency . . . . .	111	45	11
Stinginess . . . . .	96	55	17
Venereal disease . . . . .	79	48	6
Sex refusal . . . . .	78	43	16
Excessive sex demands . . . . .	78	50	12
Slovenliness . . . . .	73	46	7
Children by former marriage . . . . .	65	37	2
Discipline of children . . . . .	58	44	9
Evil companions . . . . .	54	30	12
Restlessness . . . . .	36	21	1
Age differences . . . . .	31	17	2
Inadequate income . . . . .	27	13	2
Sex perversion . . . . .	24	19	0
Black sheep . . . . .	22	16	1
Religious differences . . . . .	18	12	0
National differences . . . . .	7	4	0

## DOMESTIC DISCORD

TABLE VI

RELATION OF DOMESTIC DISCORD PROBLEMS TO TREATMENT  
TECHNIQUES: UNITED CHARITIES, 1924-25; JEWISH  
SOCIAL SERVICE BUREAU, 1925

PROBLEMS	TOTAL CASES	TREATMENT TECHNIQUES					
		No Record	Court of Domes- tic Re- lations	Order- ing-and- Forbid- ding	Court of Domes- tic Re- lations & Psychi- atric Ex- amination	Court of Domes- tic Re- lations and Confer- ence	Con- ference
Total.....	1,573	562	718	22	40	42	28
Domestic difficulty....	360	116	109	13	11	9	13
Desertion.....	474	190	226	2	8	2	1
Non-support.....	127	119	79	0	4	1	1
Combinations, includ- ing separation.....	612	137	304	7	17	30	13

TABLE VII

RELATION OF TREATMENT OF DOMESTIC DISCORD TO OUTCOME:  
UNITED CHARITIES, 1924-25 AND JEWISH SOCIAL  
SERVICE BUREAU, 1925

TREATMENT TECHNIQUE	TOTAL CASES	OUTCOME				
		Deser- tion	Dis- cord	Divorce	No Rec- ord of Discord	Adjust- ment
Total.....	1,573	379	966	78	84	66
No record.....	470	144	249	23	30	24
Court of Domestic Relations only.....	718	182	445	37	31	23
Social Service only.....	167	18	120	7	13	9
Court of Domestic Relations and Social Service.....	218	35	152	11	10	10

TABLE VIII

ADJUSTMENTS IN DOMESTIC DISCORD CASES AND INTERVIEW OF  
HUSBAND: UNITED CHARITIES, 1924-25, AND JEWISH  
SOCIAL SERVICE BUREAU, 1925

HUSBAND INTERVIEWED?	TOTAL CASES	OUTCOME	
		Adjustment	No Record of Discord and Adjustment
Total .....	1,391	66	150
Yes .....	997	54	117
No. ....	394	12	33

TABLE IX

SIZE OF FAMILY IN DOMESTIC DISCORD CASES AND ADJUSTMENT:  
UNITED CHARITIES, 1924-25, AND JEWISH SOCIAL  
SERVICE BUREAU, 1925

NUMBER OF CHILDREN	OUTCOME		
	Total	No Record of Discord.	Adjustment
Total .....	150	84	66
0-5 .....	128	66	62
6 and over .....	22	18	4

## DOMESTIC DISCORD

TABLE X

PROBLEMS IN CASES ENDING IN ADJUSTMENT: UNITED CHARITIES,  
1924-25, AND JEWISH SOCIAL SERVICE BUREAU, 1925

PROBLEMS	OUTCOME		
	Total	No Record of Discord	Adjustment
Total.....	150	84	66
Domestic difficulty.....	55	20	35
Desertion .....	42	28	14
Non-support .....	11	6	5
Combinations .....	42	30	12

TABLE XI

YEARS OF DOMESTIC DISCORD AND ADJUSTMENT: UNITED CHARITIES,  
1924-25, AND JEWISH SOCIAL SERVICE BUREAU, 1925

YEARS OF DOMESTIC DISCORD	OUTCOME		
	Total	No Record of Discord	Adjustment
Total.....	150	84	66
0-4.....	124	64	60
5 and over.....	26	20	6

## APPENDIX B

### PLAN FOR CLINICAL TREATMENT OF DOMESTIC DISCORD

A domestic discord clinic would be concerned with two tasks, both of which are necessary for more adequate control: (1) research into the factors causing domestic discord, and (2) research in treatment techniques. Such a clinic might be established on a large or a small scale with the assurance of equally good results so far as the quality of the work is concerned. The plans below, A and B, represent the two extremes of the scale:

#### PLAN A

1. Staff
  - a) A physician, who is also a psychiatrist
  - b) A psychologist
  - c) Two sociologists, one man and one woman
  - d) A social worker
2. Office force
  - a) A stenographer
  - b) A secretary
3. Office and laboratory equipment
  - a) The customary office equipment
  - b) Apparatus for giving psychological tests
  - c) Medical equipment

#### PLAN B

1. Staff and office force
  - a) Two sociologists: one man and one woman, the latter also experienced in social work
  - b) A secretary-stenographer
2. The customary office equipment

Under Plan B it is assumed that medical, psychiatric, and psychological services could be obtained through the established agencies already giving such services to social agencies.

#### SIGNIFICANCE OF CLINIC

The treatment of cases in a clinic should contribute three things to those who are concerned with the problem of control of human behavior: (1) It should contribute to our knowledge of the processes and factors making for domestic discord in modern life. (2) It should contribute more effective methods of control of domestic discord, both preventive and remedial. (3) It should also contribute certain general principles of control which would be of value to all those who are attempting to bring about adjustments between human beings, and their environments. As such the results would be a contribution both to sociology and to social work.

## APPENDIX C

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